



THE INDEPENDENT

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Identity of drugs case minister 'to be revealed within days'

The great secret which has been the key talking point at New Year parties - the identity of "Cabinet minister X" - could be settled within days. Colin Brown and Michael Streeter say the Government is keen to get it out in the open before Parliament returns.

The son of "Cabinet Minister X" who was accused of drug-dealing could be let off by the police with a caution within the next few days, freeing the minister to reveal his identity before the Commons returns from the New Year recess.

Colleagues of the minister, whose identity has been an open secret around Whitehall and the subject of New Year party speculation across Britain, believe it is vital that the air is cleared before he is named under the cover of parliamentary privilege.

It is feared that a rebel Labour backbencher or an opposition party MP will use Commons privilege to name the minister by tabling a Commons question or challenging the Prime Minister at Question Time about his position, unless he reveals his identity next week.

The Government believes the issue will be settled quickly if the minister is allowed publicly to defend his position, and his actions in taking his son to a police station after the boy was accused of selling £10-worth of cannabis to a reporter in a pub.

The minister's son is expected to be cautioned by the police and let off with a warning because of lack of evidence. Another boy who allegedly supplied the drug may be cautioned, and no action taken against the *Daily Mirror* journalist, Dawn Alford.

That could enable the Cabinet minister to reveal his identity without being held in contempt of court for identifying the boy. Ministers believe that the identity of their colleague should be disclosed to avoid any charge in the Commons of an attempt at a cover-up.

Mr X has made it clear that he wants to disclose his identity but has been following legal advice that it was impossible for him to do so until the charges against his son have been dealt with.

The minister, who spent New Year with his family at a house in the country, was last night back in London to hear about how one of his protection officers dealt with a fracas at a neighbour's house. *The Independent* has learned that a police officer stationed outside Mr X's home on New Year's Eve stopped a fight at a nearby house where gatecrashers attempted to disrupt a New Year party.

Both the minister and his family have been feeling the intense pressure surrounding the speculation about his identity, but sources close to him last night said there was no suggestion that he would switch portfolios or resign.

"The minister and his family have been under a lot of pressure, but they are bearing up. He is in a ridiculous position. But the fact is, he is prevented from saying anything by law. If that position changed, and there was no legal bar to him doing so, it would all become clear."

"He feels at the end of the day people will respect him for what he has done. He had a statement ready to release before he went down to the nick with the lad, but the lawyers, the son's solicitor and the Attorney-General all said you cannot do that," said the source.

The apparent recommendation by Scotland Yard that there should be no prosecution is based on concerns about being able to prove in court the charge of unlawful supply.

The two criteria by which prosecutors judge every case is whether first there is sufficient evidence to have a good chance of conviction, and secondly, whether it is in the public interest to go ahead with the case.

If there is sufficient evidence in a case of allegedly supplying drugs, even when it concerns small amounts, such as here, the prosecution will normally go ahead - unlike possession of small amounts, when a police caution is a common option. This suggests that the police in the minister's son's case, who have interviewed both the youth and Ms Alford, who bought the drugs, are unhappy about conflicts in the evidence.

You might think this Roman is stark raving mad.



But no. It's New Year's Day, the whole world over

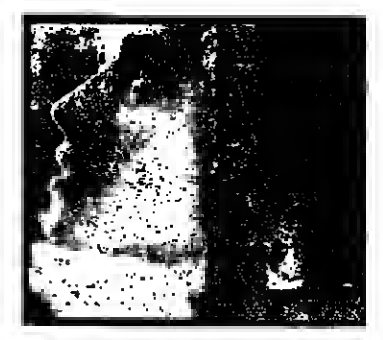


First wave: An Italian dives into the Tiber from Rome's Cavour Bridge (top) and bather flee the sea at Scheveningen beach in The Netherlands (above left) and Whitley Bay in North-east England



Photographs: Luciano del Castillo/EPA, Serge Lutgenberg/AP, Owen Humphreys/PA

INSIDE TODAY



'Gagging for it might not be a Henry James phrase, but it's flashed in neon over every character'

FILM/15

PLUS Sports Calendar 98

TODAY'S NEWS

Drugs tsar plans early education

Britain's new drugs "tsar" has told *The Independent*, in his first full interview since taking the job, that children as young as four should be taught about the dangers of narcotics. Keith Hellawell also says he is particularly concerned about dealers who deliberately lure young people into addiction by selling cheap heroin. Page 5

Innocence lost

A survey of more than 900 teenagers found that more than half the girls wish they had waited longer before losing their virginity, with many feeling they were pressed into it against their will. Among both sexes, curiosity was the most common reason given for having sex for the first time. Page 3

Loyalists threaten more revenge killings

The New Year's Eve attack on a Belfast pub left one man dead, five injured and Ulster's damaged peace process balancing precariously on the precipice of sectarian strife. Louise Jury and Colin Brown report on the latest threat to the peace talks.

their statement warned: "This is not the end."

The attack by two masked men in the packed Clifton Tavern in a Catholic area of North Belfast, shortly after 4pm on Wednesday night, intensified the pressure on the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Mr Mowlem, to offer a concession to the loyalists. They are demanding a full public inquiry into the INLA assassination of Billy Wright inside the high-security Maze prison.

Billy Hutchinson, leader of the Progressive Unionist Party, which is involved in the cross-party peace talks, warned that his party would pull out before the talks recommence on 12

January, unless Mr Mowlem made concessions to the Loyalists. He said he wanted concessions to be addressed at a meeting between the PUP and Irish ministers next Wednesday.

Demands for a public inquiry were put to Mr Mowlem by the Ulster Unionist leader, David Trimble, at an angry meeting hours before the killing. She is considering the appeal and now might find the pressure for some concession to the loyalists too great to resist.

The pressure was intensified by the Shadow Northern Ireland Secretary, Andrew Mackay, who called for the planned internal inquiry into security at the Maze to be started immediately and for its remit to be widened.

The PUP is one of the parties which has expressed concern that the process has not been "even-handed" between Unionists and republicans. Mr Hutchinson said that problem had to be addressed. "It would be my opinion that if they don't deal with that on 12 January, the PUP will be missing from the talks."

Fears are growing that the republicans will now feel obliged to retaliate for the two loyalist murders since Billy Wright was killed on Saturday. The Loyalist Volunteer Force carried out an attack on a crowded hotel within hours of

Wright's death, killing doorman Seamus Dillon, 45. It claimed responsibility for that attack.

The threat to the peace process is also increased by the risk that the loyalist ceasefire could end. Reports in Belfast suggest that when the prisoners released from the Maze for Christmas return to prison today, the UDA inmates will vote on whether to abandon the ceasefire. David Ervine, of the Ulster Progressive Unionist party which has links to the UVF, admitted there were people who wanted the ceasefire to end.

In an interview with BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme, he blamed the British Government. "At the moment we're

seeing confidence building measures, concessions, doled out like sweets, outside the process. They should be housed within the process."

John Hume, the SDLP leader, said the object of the latest killings was to derail the talks. "That should strengthen the will not only of all the political parties but of the vast majority of people not to be knocked off course and to remain firmly committed to reaching agreement in a totally peaceful atmosphere."

Gerry Kelly, who is on the Sinn Féin team in the multi-party talks, condemned the pub attack, saying: "The peace process is shattered."

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CROSSWORDS Pages 22, 24
WEATHER Page 2

Web address: <http://www.independent.co.uk>

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SEE IT. BE AMAZED. AND THEN SEE IT AGAIN.

FROM PAUL VERHOEVEN THE DIRECTOR OF ROBOCOP AND TOTAL RECALL

STARSHIP TROOPERS

STARTS TODAY AT CINEMAS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

COLUMN ONE

Eyes down for great staff lootery draw

Lots of companies carry out spot checks to make sure their staff are not going home with the profits in their pockets. Now one chain of stores has decided to go a step further and introduce an element of fun into the process. Instead of the dull old routine of lining up to have their bags checked, staff will be able to pick coloured balls out of a bag to determine which lucky person will be the subject of a random search before going home. Yes, it's the National Lootery and it could be you.

The searches were introduced at Hobby Craft toy and model super-stores nationwide yesterday and will be carried out by security staff or management.

Once the store has closed for the day, staff will be required to form an orderly queue as the balls are selected one by one. A green ball allows the employee to go straight home without undergoing a search, a yellow one means an on the spot bag check, and red hits the jackpot - a search of the person's locker, bag and car.

The scheme was revealed to staff in an internal memo, which while stressing there was "no problem in this store" read: "We have been requested by head office to carry out random searches. As I do not wish to embarrass any member of staff by singling them out I have decided that we should work the following system."

Once the ball has been selected and the area of the search decided, the duty manager then has the choice of searching either all or part of the designated areas.

The memo ends on the somewhat hopeful note: "I hope that I can rely on your co-operation to make this as painless for everyone as possible."

Kate Watson-Smyth

PEOPLE



Shipping news: John Brown, 96, who led the design team at the Clyde yard that built the royal yacht *Britannia* in the 1950s, yesterday called for her to be scrapped to bring her life to a dignified end. The Government is considering two bids to base the yacht in Manchester or Edinburgh but Mr Brown said no commercial venture could preserve her property. Photograph: PA

Search for mother who abandoned baby

Police yesterday issued an appeal for help to find a mother who abandoned a new-born baby boy on New Year's Eve.

The child is just three days old and was discovered lying on a pavement in an alleyway behind garages in Leyton, east London. Doctors who are caring for the baby at Whipps Cross Hospital in east London, dubbed him "Robert Alan" after the two ambulance men who picked him up.

The infant, who is mixed race, was wrapped in a patterned shawl and dressed only in a pale green sleep suit. He still had a plastic yellow umbilical clip attached, which police believe has come from a local hospital or midwife.

They issued an urgent appeal for the mother to come forward or anyone who knew her to contact police.

Detective Inspector Phil Jones, of Leyton CID, said: "We are anxious to reunite the baby with its mother. I am particularly pleased that the baby has

been found fit and healthy, and that's good news for the New Year.

"We have checked all hospitals in the area in a bid to trace the mother but to no avail. We believe the baby could have been born in a hospital or by a midwife at home as the clip used to tie the umbilical cord was a type only available to medical staff."

The baby, who weighs 7lb 11oz, was heard crying by a man on his way to buy a lottery ticket.

Dr Iain Macintosh of Whipps Cross Hospital said: "It could be that the baby was born in a hospital or by medical staff at home. The child was in good condition, he was relatively warm and had probably only been out in the cold for about half an hour. It seems he had been well cared for."

"It is vital that the baby's mother comes forward and I am worried about her mental state."

Mr Jones said: "This is a beautiful baby boy who needs his mum. Let us make this a happy New Year for both mother and child by reuniting them."

UPDATE

HEALTH

NHS staff shortages hit 10,000

The NHS is short of nearly 10,000 doctors and nurses, the Liberal Democrats said yesterday. Dr Evan Harris, the party's health spokesman, said the figures are based on Department of Health releases and figures gathered by the House of Commons library. He claimed that in nine months in office, the Government had "not lifted a finger to fill these gaping holes in NHS staff shortages."

According to his findings, the NHS is short of 1,600 hospital doctors, more than 8,000 nurses, and there are nearly 1,000 GP vacancies. Cancelled operations also rose by 5 per cent between April and September. Dr Harris said: "These new figures show that the NHS is facing a staffing crisis this winter. With nearly 10,000 doctors and nurses missing from wards, a record number of operations have been cancelled."

The Liberal Democrat spokesman said Frank Dobson, the Secretary of State for Health, tried to paint a picture of cooperating within the NHS and treatment for all "but without the staff he is wasting his breath."

The Liberal Democrats want an increase in the number of medical and nursing students and public funding to pay for them, plus incentives for medical graduates to stay in the NHS and for students to go into nursing.

INFANTS

Tests show breast milk is best

Babies who are breast fed and not given solid food too early turn out leaner, less prone to lung problems and with lower blood pressure, says research published yesterday in the *British Medical Journal*. The study of 545 children aged six to 10 in Dundee strongly confirmed the health benefits of mother's milk and infant feeding guidelines.

The research team, led by Dr Stewart Forsyth at Ninewells Hospital and Medical School, Dundee, found the probability of having respiratory illness was 17 per cent for children who were exclusively breast fed for at least 15 weeks. The risk rose to 32.2 per cent for wholly bottle fed babies. Solid feeding before 15 weeks was associated with an increased likelihood of wheeze in childhood and greater body fat and weight.

Current guidelines recommend that babies are exclusively breast fed for the first four months of life.

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NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING
Recycled paper made up 41.4% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the first half of 1997.

TOURIST RATES

Australia (dollars)	2.43	Italy (lira)	2,830
Austria (schillings)	20.13	Japan (yen)	211.79
Belgium (francs)	59.19	Malta (lira)	0.62
Canada (\$)	2.30	Netherlands (guilders)	3.22
Cyprus (pounds)	0.83	Norway (kroner)	11.85
Denmark (kroner)	10.99	Portugal (escudos)	200.49
France (francs)	9.58	Spain (pesetas)	242.00
Germany (marks)	2.87	Sweden (kroner)	2.74
Greece (drachmas)	456.01	Switzerland (francs)	2.33
Hong Kong (\$)	1.39	Turkey (lira)	328,403
Ireland (pounds)	1.11	USA (\$)	1.61

Source: Thomson Cook
Rates for indicative purposes only

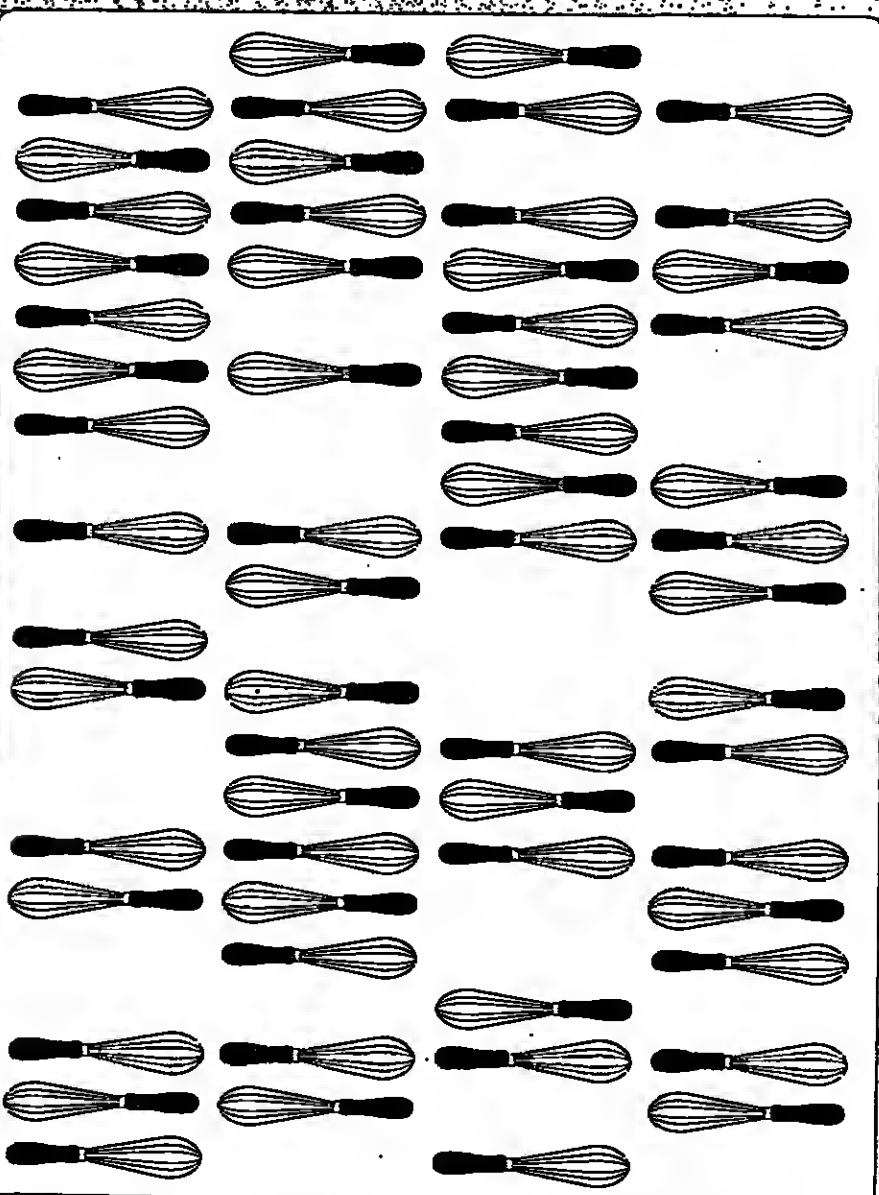
ZITS

by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman 7.30 FOR 8

by Chris Priestley

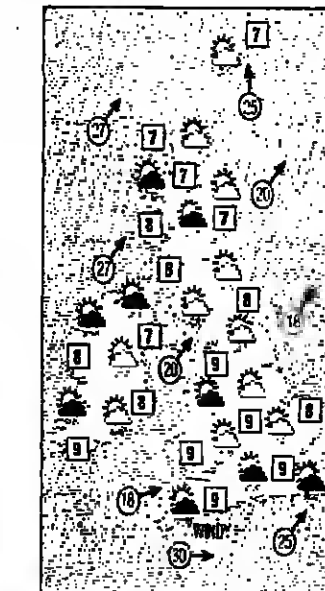


WINTER SALE NOW ON



WEATHER

The British Isles, noon today



most recent available figure at noon local time: c: cloudy; l: light; h: heavy; m: mist; r: rain; s: snow; su: sunny; h: thunder

Aberdeen	c 5.41	Cardiff	c 8.46	Liverpool	c 6.43	Oxford	c 8.43
Anglesey	r 8.48	Carlisle	c 5.41	Leicester	c 7.45	Plymouth	c 18.50
Ayr	r 8.46	Cork	r 11.52	Isle of Scilly	18.50	Scarborough	c 5.41
Belfast	r 7.45	Dublin	r 8.48	Jersey	c 8.48	Shrewsbury	c 5.41
Birmingham	r 6.43	Edinburgh	r 5.41	London	sh 7.45	Southampton	8.46
Bristol	r 4.39	Exeter	r 18.58	Manchester	c 5.41	St Andrews	c 5.41
Bournemouth	8.46	Gloucester	r 7.45	Newcastle	c 4.39	Stirling	r 8.46
Brighton	8.48	Hereford	c 8.48	Nottingham	6.43	York	c 3.47

Lighting-up times

Today	Tomorrow
Belfast	15.59 to 8.44
Birmingham	15.55 to 8.16
Bristol	16.03 to 8.13
Glasgow	15.44 to 8.46
London	15.53 to 8.04
Manchester	15.51 to 8.23
Newcastle	15.39 to 8.29

AA Roadwatch

Somerset, M5 J22-23 Highbridge to Bridgwater. Major roadworks due to bridge repairs. A 3 mile contraflow is in place. Until 31st March 1998.

West Midlands, M6 J6 Birmingham. Long-term roadworks. Northbound entry slip to the M6 North closed at Salford Circus. Diversions in place.

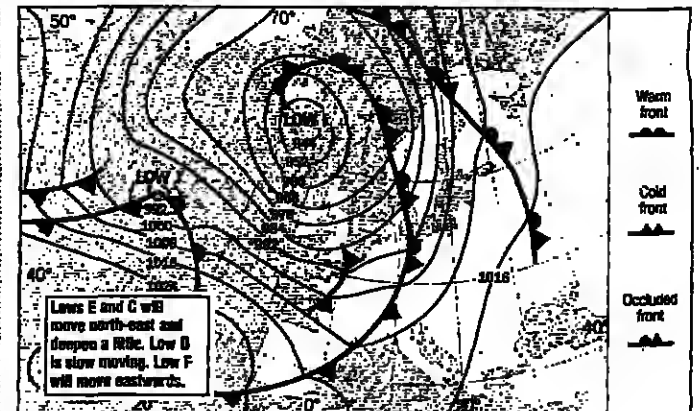
West Yorkshire, M1 J43-J42 Stourton to Lillington. A contraflow and a 50mph speed limit are in place. Until 13th July 1998.

General summary and outlook

North-east Scotland will start cloudy with rain, but the wet weather will become confined to the North-east. The rest of Scotland and much of England and Wales will start overcast and misty with some pockets of thick fog and local drizzle. Many places will stay cloudy but it should brighten up a shade, although in one or two spots the early fog may be reluctant to clear. In the south-west of England and south Wales a scattering of showers will develop, heavy in places.

It will stay reasonably mild with little or no overnight frost. More fog is likely on Sunday morning. This will slowly lift to leave a few sunny spells here and there, but it will remain on the cloudy side with a few showers in the west. Late in the day outbreaks of rain will reach south-west England, and this wet weather will extend slowly north-east on Monday, although much of Scotland and eastern England may not see the rain until Tuesday.

Atlantic chart, noon today



World weather

Athens	c 13.55	Florence	m 12.54	New York	f -2.28
Auckland	f 21.70	Frankfurt	c 8.46	Nice	c 15.56
B. Aires	r 18.04	Geneva	m 7.45	Osaka	c 15.58
Bangkok	c 32.90	Glasgow	c 12.55	Paris	f 6.43
Barcelona	r 13.55	Helsinki	c -4.25	Prague	c 2.56
Beirut	c 15.59	Hong Kong	c 26.79	Rangoon	c -1.38
Belgrade	r 12.54	Khartoum	c 6.48	Rio de Jan	f 18.83
Bombay	c 31.88	Jakarta	c 15.56	Riyadh	f 18.84
Buenos Aires	c 18.88	London	c 18.88	Rome	f 14.57
Calcutta	c 18.88	Los Angeles	c 18.88	Stockholm	f 2.59
Cairo	c 18.88	Madrid	c 18.88	Sydney	c 28.84
Cape Town	c 25.77	Manila	c 14.57	Taipei	c 21.70
Cebu	c 19.64	Moscow	c 14.57	Tokyo	c 6.48
Christchurch	r 21.79	Mumbai	c 18.88	Vladivostok	c 1.34
Copenhagen	c 3.37	Medan	c 32.88	Warsaw	r 3.57
Darwin	c 14.57	Montreal	f -1.18	Washington	c 9.37
Dhaka	c 28.82	Moscow	sh -1.38	Wellington	c 22.72
Dublin	c 18.88	Munich	c 3.87	Zurich	c 6.32

High tides

London	AM 17.58	PM 17.58
Liverpool	2.50	8.2
Aberdeen	10.51	11.2
Hull (Albert Dock)	10.12	7.6
Greenwich	4.26	3.1
Dun Laoghaire	3.31	3.6

Sun and moon

Sun rises	8.03
Sun sets	18.53
Moon rises	22.58
Moon sets	11.28

Last quarter: Dec 21

Apology: Due to a production problem information in yesterday's weather panel was reproduced in error from an earlier date.

Curse of the Kennedys claims its latest victim

Yet again, tragedy has struck at America's version of royalty, with the death in a skiing accident in Colorado of Michael Kennedy, son of the assassinated Senator Robert Kennedy. Rupert Cornwell looks at a family beset by fame and disaster in equal measure

If his surname had been Jones or Brown, his passing would have been unremarked — just another skier who lost control, crashing into a tree on Wednesday as he hurtled down a slope at Aspen Mountain, injuring himself fatally. Not though if that surname belongs to a family called Kennedy. As in John F Kennedy. Then you are victim of The Curse, paying the ultimate price for hubris past.

The story goes back almost 60 years, when Joseph Kennedy Senior, grandson of Irish immigrants, philanthropist, tycoon, bootlegger and harker of Franklin Roosevelt, realised his own political ambitions had been wrecked by his readiness to appease Hitler while ambassador to London. Instead he dedicated all his might and means, fair and foul, to make one of his children president. Joe would succeed, but at a price he could not imagine.

Already in 1941 his daughter Rosemary had been placed in a mental home after a failed lobotomy. But worse would follow in 1944 when Joseph Jr, the apple of his father's eye and repository of his vicarious ambition, was killed in a plane crash while serving in Britain with the US Air Force. Another daughter, Kathleen, would die in France in another air crash in 1948. But the mantle of expectation had passed to his second son, John, who would use his own charm and ruthlessness — and his father's money and strings — to make it to the White House in 1961. But on 22 November 1963, Lee Harvey Oswald struck in Dallas.

Less than five years later, half paralysed by an earlier stroke, Joe would watch a third son die, when Robert was shot dead in a Los Angeles hotel on 4 June 1968, just as he won the California Democratic primary to place the presidency firmly in his sights. That August, his remaining son Edward, 33-year-old Massachusetts senator, sat in Chicago with his advisers on the eve of the Democratic convention, pondering whether to use the outpouring of sympathy



Michael Kennedy (second right) flanked by members of his family at a tribute in 1992 to Robert, his father who was assassinated in 1968. Photograph: Amy Sancetta

to make a bid for the nomination himself.

No, they decided; wait for 1972, or better still 1976. But The Curse would not be denied. The very next year Teddy drove a car off a bridge on the island of Chappaquiddick, Massachusetts, and ran from the scene as his staffworker Mary Jo Kopechne was drowned. His hopes of the White House were gone, and the first high dent was made in America's hitherto unquestioning romance with the Kennedys. Thereafter the misfortunes would continue. But increasingly they would be self-inflicted.

For many younger Kennedys, unearned celebrity and comparisons with political titans past were burdens too heavy to bear. In 1973, Teddy's son Edward lost a leg because of cancer. That same year, Robert's son Joe was involved in a car accident which left a female passenger paralysed for life. Another son, Robert Jr, was caught with drugs while a teenager, while yet another, David, died of a drug overdose in 1984.

The episodes merely added credibility to the less flattering portrait of the earlier Kennedys emerging in a string of books and personal memoirs. These dwelt not on the glitz of Camelot, but the consuming Kennedy lusts for power and sex, and their congenital disregard for women. By 1986, Edward's son Patrick was undergoing treatment for cocaine addiction. In 1991

his nephew William Kennedy Smith went on trial for rape. William was acquitted, but not before revelations of drinking sessions with his uncle that cemented Teddy's image as an alcohol-drenched lecher.

And thus to Michael Kennedy, who until last year was regarded as a rising political star in his own right. Then came allegations of an affair with the family's 14-

year-old babysitter and his own admission of alcoholism. Now Michael is dead — and the family's power and prestige is at its lowest ebb in three-quarters of a century.

Edward Kennedy surely will not seek a seventh full Senate term in 2000, when he will be 68. Robert's son Joseph, self-appointed standard-bearer of the younger Kennedys, but in truth a pompous Congressional lightweight, has been forced to withdraw from the state's 1998 Governors race after woman trouble of his own. JFK's son John Jr, noted for his looks rather than his intellect, is one younger Kennedy who has kept his head. Conceivably he might use his politico-celebrity magazine *George* as a springboard for a political career. But the pick of the bunch could be Patrick, who has overcome his cocaine problems to be a second-term Congressman for Rhode Island. But if he goes any higher, it will be thanks to merit, not myth.

AMERICA'S TRAGIC DYNASTY

JOSEPH P. KENNEDY JR.: Died in plane crash during the Second World War, aged 29.
KATHLEEN KENNEDY: Married William John Robert Cavendish, the Marquess of Hartington. She later died in a plane crash, aged 28.
PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY, JR.: Assassinated in Dallas on 22 Nov 1963, aged 46.
ROBERT F. KENNEDY: Assassinated in June 1968, aged 43.
DAVID KENNEDY: Son of Robert, died in 1984 of a drug overdose in a hotel after being thrown out of the family holiday home at Palm Beach.
MICHAEL KENNEDY: Gained notoriety for an alleged 1996 affair with his family's babysitter, was killed in a skiing accident on New Year's Eve. He was 39.

TOMORROW

IN THE MAGAZINE

If it's January it must be The Outback... top writers on 12 top destinations



TIME OUT

The lure of Zanzibar, Redford's ski heaven

NEXT WEEK

The Century in photographs From Monday for 98 days in The Eye, 98 years of historic pictures

Lunch with Conran for only £10

Peer-group pressure and why most women regret saying yes to teenage sex

Many teenage girls having sex for the first time do so reluctantly, under duress, because they do not have the will to resist.

Jeremy Laurence, Health Editor, examines a study which suggests most women regret the early loss of their virginity.

The first sexual experience is invariably disappointing — but that is almost the only point about it on which girls and boys agree.

A study of more than 900 teenagers found widely diverging perceptions between the sexes of how their first sexual encounter had occurred. Pressure from men, curiosity and drink push many young women into doing what they later regret.

Women were more likely to report being forced — one in 14 of the total sample rising to one in four of those under 14 — and less likely to say that they were "equally

willing". Fewer than one in six men but more than half the women thought they should have waited longer before losing their virginity. Women were more likely than men to say they were "carried away by their feelings" as the reason for having sex, while men were more likely to say they wanted to lose their virginity.

Women who had their first experience of intercourse when under 16 said the main reason was that most people of their age were doing it. Most of these had sex with an older boy but for all age groups, when

both partners were having sex for the first time, there was less discrepancy between the sexes about the willingness with which the encounter was entered into.

The study, conducted in New Zealand and published in the *British Medical Journal* echoes the findings of previous British research. An Economic and Science Research Council study in 1990 found many girls who reported having been under pressure to have sex for a long time who finally submitted, usually when drunk, because they had run out of reasons for resisting.

Often the poor quality of their first experience left them with no desire to repeat it.

In that study, the girls aged from 16 to 21, spoke eloquently of the social pressures on them. One said: "I just thought I'm sick of Mandy who is bonking all the time and me not getting nothing. So I says it's time to do it. He was being really nice and I thought I'll risk him not wanting to see me again. So I did." Another said: "It was a matter of saying 'no' lots and lots of times and then sort of going to sleep because

I wouldn't be able to handle it."

In the New Zealand study, the researchers from the University of Otago medical school found the average age of first intercourse was 16 in the girls (compared with 17 in Britain) and 17 in the boys. Almost a third of the women who lost their virginity before the age of 16 reported having had a sexually transmitted disease at some point since.

The authors say the results showing most women regret early intercourse "need to be considered by young people themselves".

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Man questioned over headless body

A man was being questioned last night in connection with the death of a teenager whose headless body was found dumped in a bin in Blackpool.

But detectives stressed they were still hunting for whoever might have killed Christopher Hartley, 17, and dismembered his corpse.

The 29-year-old man being held in Blackpool was arrested in Salford, Greater Manchester, on Wednesday night.

Christopher, from Burnley, Lancashire, had held jobs at the Pleasure Beach fun-fair and on stalls in the resort. Tests have so far been unable to show how he died. His head has not been found.

Partner charged

The partner of Lisa Blunt, 23, a mother of four who was reported missing 10 days ago, appeared before magistrates yesterday charged with her murder, Vincent Shilton, 29, of Bestwood, Nottingham, was remanded in custody at a special sitting of the city's Magistrates Court. Police believe a charred body found two days ago in Bulwell, Nottingham, is that of Ms Blunt.



Crowd puller: An inflatable of cartoon character Olive Oyl in Whitehall during yesterday's London Parade Photograph: Philip Meech

Britain 'is spying on EU partners'

Britain spies on her own European partners, a former senior intelligence officer claims.

The officer, who cannot be identified, told Michael Cockrell, the maker of a television documentary: "Of course, we are all spying on each other. You need belt and braces, collateral on collateral. It would be as vital to know where your European partners are coming from, as it was to know the order of battle of Soviet forces during the Cold War."

The documentary, *How to be Foreign Secretary*, is to be shown on BBC 2 on Sunday evening. Its disclosures will come as a shock to pro-Europeans who would never have dreamed that Britain is allegedly involved in espionage within the EU.

During the programme, neither the present Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, nor his predecessors, denied suggestions that Britain operates a spy network in Europe.

When Mr Cook himself was asked whether Britain received intelligence from her European partners, he replied: "No I'm sorry. I can't talk about that because it is all secret information. We never discuss that."

And Douglas Hurd, now Lord Hurd, who was Foreign Secretary for nearly six years until 1995, was equally reticent.

When he was asked the same question, he seemed to be taken aback. He is shown biting his lip and scratching his thigh. "I don't want to go into that. That's operational. I can't, can't, can't get into that," he insisted.

Lord Renwick, the former British Ambassador in Washington, was adamant that the French, for instance, would not spy on Britain. But when he was asked whether Britain would spy on them, he replied: "Ah, that's a separate question. You'll have to ask, er, whoever..."

He added: "We have intelligence coverage of all really important negotiations that Britain is involved in. Sometimes the information is extremely useful - sometimes you know it all already."

William Waldegrave, a Foreign Office minister under the Tories, said: "The Secret Intelligence Service is very useful to the Foreign Secretary. It can't do miracles but it does provide a most extraordinary additional source of good information."

"What you must not do is become James-Bondish about it. And their people are extremely skilful at warning you that not everything that you get on an intercept - or hear on a tape of what some foreign leader said in his bath - is necessarily the full story."

Rebel Labour MEPs accuse party machine of dirty tricks

Two rebel Labour MEPs opposed to plans to reform the welfare state accused party spin doctors of dirty tricks when it appeared they had defected to the Green Party. Labour sources insisted the President of the European Parliament was convinced Ken Coates and Hugh Kerr had switched groups - opening them to immediate expulsion from the party.

Party sources this week urged the two to resign before they were expelled, but Mr Coates said the situation was being wrongly "spun" to the media by Labour as though he had made a decision "of great moment". In fact, he said, he would like to stay in the Socialist Group "for ever and ever" if it would have him, but had been forced by European Parliament bureaucracy to consider taking up an offer from the Greens of "honorary" membership. Currently he "hadn't a clue" which group he now officially belonged to.

But Labour sources accused

him of "backpeddling on a technicality. It will impress no-one". They insisted the President of the European Parliament, Jose Maria Gil-Rohles Gil-Degado, Labour MEP and Socialist group leader Pauline Green and European Parliamentary Labour Party (EPLP) leader Wayne David were all convinced the two men had left the Socialist group and joined the Greens. Departure from the Socialist group would automatically see the two out of the EPLP.

If they had joined the Greens, then the question of whether that has earned them automatic expulsion from Labour itself was not immediately clear. But Labour sources said they were sure pressure would now build on the two men to leave the party. Mr Coates' local party chairman said he should "do the decent thing" by standing down and fighting a by-election.

— Colin Brown

Tanker runs aground

An unladen chemical tanker has gone aground in storm conditions off Torbay, coastguards said yesterday. The 22,000-ton *Santa Anna* - from Greece, but registered in Panama - dragged an anchor and went aground on the seaward side of Thatcher's Rock, Devon, said Portland coastguards. The vessel, carrying a crew of 29, was still sound and in clean ballast.

The *Santa Anna* went aground in rough seas and

winds gusting to more than 50mph. She was carrying clean ballast, but also 200 tonnes of fuel oil and 50 tonnes of lubricating oil.

The Marine Pollution Control Unit had been informed and was monitoring the situation, said coastguards. There were no plans yet to take any of the crew off the vessel.

The crew are understood to be Spanish, and the boat had been moored in Torbay.

DAILY POEM

Self portrait with National Lottery winnings after a Roll-Over Jackpot

By Simon Armitage

Numbers, there on the screen, were the self-same: the date of my birth expressed as a sum, the rate of my heart while perfectly calm, my height in feet, my weight in the nearest stone, the teeth in my head, the women I've known.

Stark-bollock-naked except for a hat, sunk to the waist in a slag-heap of cash, I'm rolling a joint with a fifty-pound note to blow nought after nought in rings of smoke.

The artist breaks off from his easel for a piss. A mirror on the wall, face on, gives back me in the pink, in paint, and me in flesh.

It's hard to tell the fraction from the whole, I think: which makes up which, what gives, if that divides by this, or this by that, or that by this.

This week's poems come from the five volumes shortlisted for the 1997 Whitbread Poetry Award. The winner will be announced next Tuesday, 6 January, along with the other Whitbread winners for biography, fiction and first novels. Simon Armitage's poem is taken from his *CloudCuckooLand* (Faber, £7.99).

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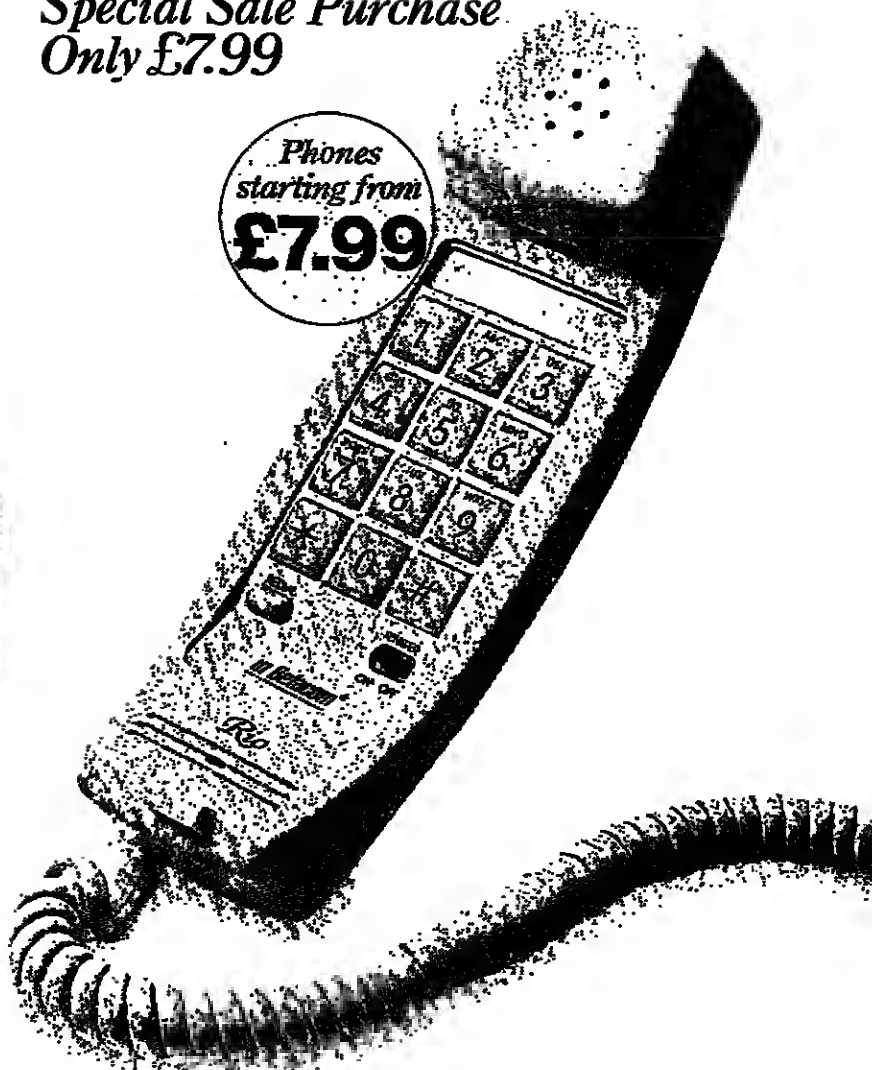
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صحنه من الامل

The historic bar on hereditary peers sitting in the Commons is likely to be lifted under the Government's reforms for the House of Lords. As a Cabinet committee gets down to business, Colin Brown, Chief Political Correspondent, says hereditary peers could be allowed to stand for election for the first time.

Hereditary peers who are barred from voting at general elections could be allowed to stand for seats in the House of Commons under the Government's plans for reform of the House of Lords.

itary of their voting rights as part of the reform to the House of Lords, they should be able to stand for the House of Commons and vote for the first time in elections.

Peers are barred from voting and standing for election to the Commons, along with the insane and criminals, because they are represented in the House of Lords. But when they cease to be eligible to vote in the Lords, the hereditary peers would have no representation, unless a change in the law was allowed.

A Cabinet source said: "The reason that peers are disqualified from standing in elections is because they already have power in the Lords. There are various suggestions being made about the hereditaries, about whether they could lose their voting rights but keep their speaking rights.

Marquess of Bath (left) and Tony Benn both support giving the vote to peers barred from voting in the Lords

bo. It would be logical to say they should be allowed to vote and stand for elections to the Commons if they lose their rights to vote in the House of Lords."

Michael Ancram, the Conservative spokesman on constitutional affairs, could be directly effected. As the Earl of

Angram, he is the heir to the title of the Marquess of Lothian and has told friends that if he inherited the title he would still wish to stand in the Commons. "There should be a change in the law," he said.

Under the present rules, he would have to renounce his peerage to do so, but he would

he ready to amend the legislation, if necessary, to make sure that the reform of the Lords enables hereditary peers to stand for the Commons.

The Marquess of Bath, a supporter of Lords reform and a Liberal Democrat peer with a hereditary title dating back to 1789, said it would be a logical move. "I don't see myself standing now. My feeling is that there is no justification for hereditary peers in the House of Lords but it would be logical to allow them to stand for the Commons."

It would also avoid embarrassing dilemmas for MPs who inherit titles. Tony Benn MP, who changed the law to renounce his title as Viscount Stansgate for his lifetime, also saw the logic of allowing hereditary peers to stand for the Commons, when they lose their voting rights in the Lords.

Cabinet policy papers are being prepared and ministerial sources said the Cabinet

committee would be getting down to business early in the New Year. Changes would be made before the end of the Parliament, in spite of the packed list of Government business, said the source. But left-wingers are likely to demand more radical changes to make the Lords an elected chamber.

Mr Benn was on Wednesday getting his teeth into the Prime Minister's powers of patronage in the wake of the New Year Honours List. He said the last 10 prime ministers had appointed 900 life peers. "Anyone who is hoping for a peerage will say nothing and do nothing that might upset the Prime Minister," he said on BBC radio.

"When you get patronage – without suggesting anything improper – it is corrupt. I have known civil servants recommending businessmen for some honour and then when they retired, they got a job on the board," he said.



Success story: Jobeda Ali **Photograph: Geoff Robinson**

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Can help slimming and weight control only as part of a calorie controlled diet

People like Jobeda Ali do not usually expect to go to Cambridge University. She is the daughter of a mother who can neither read nor write, a second-generation immigrant from Bangladesh, and was educated at east London state schools. Judith Judd, Education Editor, explains how she did it.

Jobeda Ali has overcome most types of disadvantage on the way to her upper second class degree at Trinity College, Cambridge. When she applied to Cambridge four years ago, she was told she needed three grade Bs at A-level to secure her place - unlike most of her fellow applicants who were told they needed either two or three As.

The offer was made under a special entry scheme for disadvantaged pupils. But it proved unnecessary. Jobeda gained three grade As.

Four years on, Jobeda has a new job as administrator of the group to encourage ethnic minority applicants (Geema) to the university. She is clear about her role. "I'm not interested in statistics. My aim is to ensure that black and Asian students can see enough black and Asian faces to feel comfortable here."

She remembers vividly her first invitation to coffee on her first day at Cambridge. She expected to walk in and socialise in her normal way but found herself tongue-tied. "It took me two weeks to work out what was wrong. I had never before been in a room where every other person was white."

The gap between Cambridge and some ethnic minority groups is hard for outsiders to grasp, she says. Her mother, who cannot read, write, or speak English, had never heard of Cambridge and didn't want her daughter to go. "Her reaction was 'why don't you stay in London and live at home? You

One of the big differences between a public schoolboy from Eton who comes to Cambridge and herself, she says, is the level of parental interest. "It wasn't just the case that I had no one to help with my maths homework. No one even asked me what I had done at school."

If she tried to read, her mother took away the books and said she should be doing something more useful. Even now, her mother is looking out for a suitable husband for her.

Secretly, Jobeda says, she had always wanted to try for Oxbridge, though she scarcely dared admit it to herself. When students from the group she now runs came to Tower Hamlets College where she was doing her A-levels, she was suddenly given the confidence to apply.

Her present job is to run a programme of events to persuade people like her to feel the same way. She also has plans for student-shadowing to show ethnic minority pupils a day in the life of a Cambridge students. A new video and prospectus are being sent out

For a decade, the university's message to anxious ethnic minority and state school students has been: the *Brideshead* image is wrong; there are plenty of people like you here.

Joheda argues that, of course, black and Asian people need to feel comfortable at Cambridge "but that doesn't mean they all want to rush off to dinner at the Indian Society. Some want the traditional things. I love punting. I love strawberries and champagne and I love May balls."

She knows that raising the proportion of black and Asian students - currently 11 per cent - will not be easy. "Take a white public school boy and myself. We both have an upper second from Trinity. We both go for the same job. We appear to be equal. But we are not. I am four times better than he is. I have the same degree but I have overcome the gender barrier, the class barrier and the race barrier."

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Come right in, US tells baseball refugee

A former Cuban baseball star was cleared to enter America yesterday after escaping from Cuba by boat. Five of his fellow passengers are unlikely to be so lucky. *Mary Dejevsky* asks if the US operates double standards when offering asylum to Cubans.



Orlando Hernandez: 'Close ties' to the United States

Few would argue that Orlando Hernandez did not constitute a special case. "El Duke" (the Duke), was a star pitcher for Cuba's national baseball team, one of Cuba's elite. But that came to an end two years ago, when his younger brother, Livan, also a baseball star, defected to the United States.

While Livan rose to stardom in his adopted country, helping the outsiders, the Florida Marlins, to victory in the 1997 World Series, Orlando was banned from his national team, harassed by officials and blamed for his brother's escape.

Early on 26 December, Orlando, his girlfriend, Noris Bosch, and six others left Cuba in a small sailing boat, hoping

to reach Florida. But the boat started to take on water and they were forced to land on the remote Anguilla Cay on the fringe of the Bahamas. After almost four days, they were picked up by the US Coast Guard and handed over to the Bahamian authorities. By Tuesday they were in detention in Nassau.

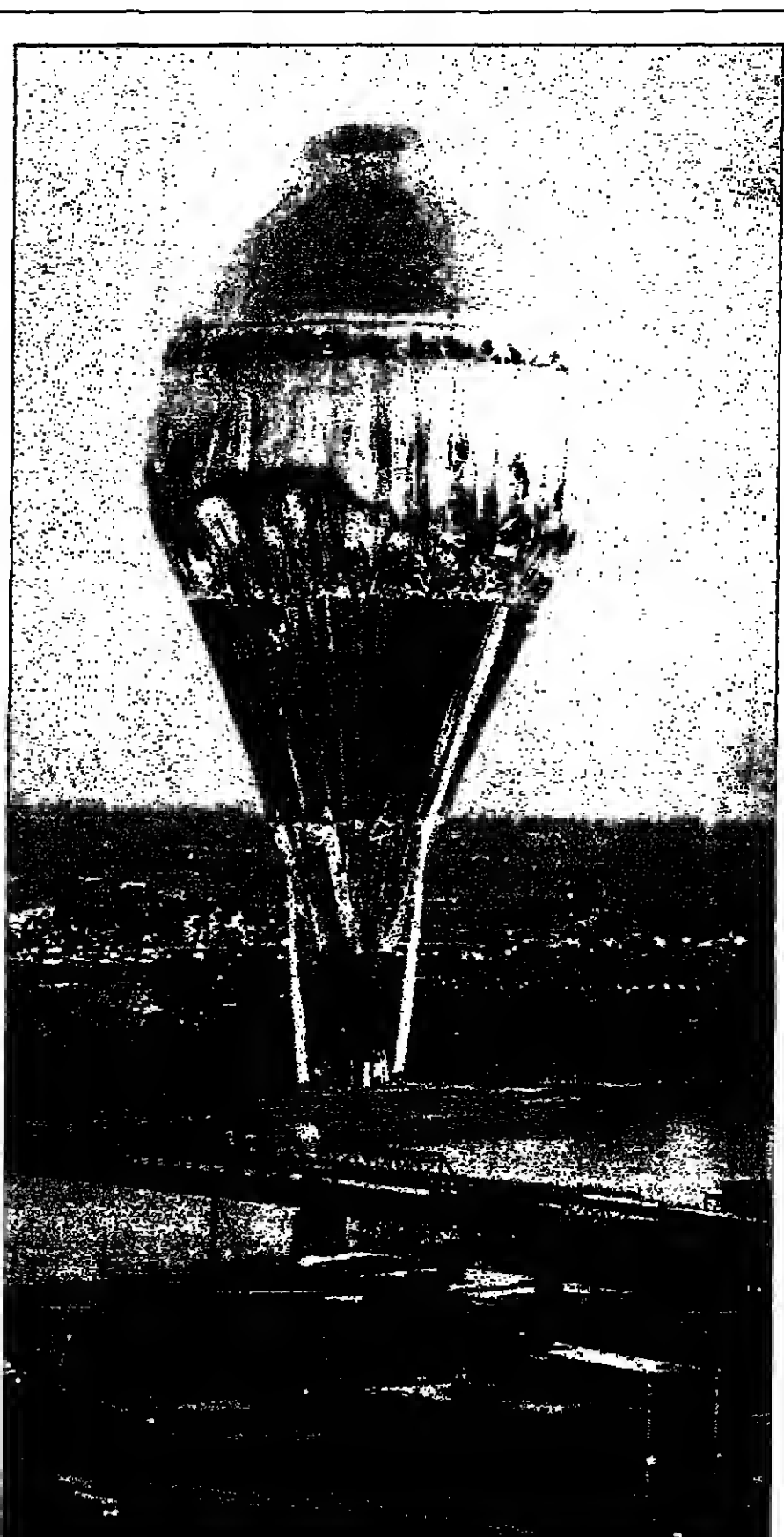
For more than three years, US policy on Cuban "boat-people" has been firm: they are repatriated unless they qualify for political asylum by demonstrating "well-grounded fear of persecution". The Bahamas has a similar policy.

Having failed to reach the Florida coast, Hernandez and the others were liable to be sent back. Instead, the State Department went into overdrive. Officials cited "special circumstances" - the only question was which would guarantee Hernandez's speediest entry into the US while setting fewest precedents.

A State Department spokesman, James Foley, spoke of his "close ties to the United States", the status of his brother as "a well-known sports figure" and the fact that "he has suffered already reprisals in Cuba as a result of his brother's defection". The US took "very seriously", said Mr Foley, Hernandez's "strong fear of additional and increased persecution" if he were sent back to Cuba.

Hernandez received a visit from the US ambassador in Nassau, representatives of Florida-based emigre organisations, and a leading Cuban emigre sports agent. Within 36 hours, he, his girlfriend and a second baseball player in the boat had been granted permission to enter the US.

Their five companions, however, are still in detention in Nassau. They are likely to be deported.



Into the blue: Millionaire adventurer Steve Fossett lifting off from Busch stadium in St Louis, Missouri, this week as he began his attempt to fly a hot-air balloon non-stop around the world
Photograph: AP/Sc Louis Post-Dispatch

Israeli foreign minister to quit

The Israeli foreign minister, David Levy, announced last night that he was resigning. He said the five MPs of his Geshet party would vote against Benjamin Netanyahu's government on the 1998 budget.

Mr Levy said he would resign immediately after the Geshet five voted against the budget. This left open a slim possibility that Mr Netanyahu might yield at the last minute to the foreign minister's pressure. Officials in the Prime Minister's office claimed, however, that the financial cost would be too high.

"This is a government which is on a flight to nowhere," Mr Levy said. The foreign minister's brother, Maxim Levy, Geshet's parliamentary whip, insisted they were not bluffing.

If Geshet joins the opposition, it would reduce Mr Netanyahu's majority to a maximum of six in

the Knesset. But a handful of opponents of the Oslo agreement in the Prime Minister's own Likud are also threatening to withhold support. Failure to pass the budget would precipitate elections.

Geshet projects itself as the champion of the underprivileged Israelis of Afro-Asian origin. Mr Levy had demanded that the government invest in a recovery programme for the depressed areas. Mr Netanyahu turned him down.

Mr Levy is the government's most outspoken supporter of West Bank withdrawals. His departure would tilt the balance to the right and highlight the question mark against Mr Netanyahu's capacity to push through the "generous" evacuation that both the Americans and Palestinians are demanding.

— Eric Silver, Jerusalem

Pol Pot 'has escaped with Chinese help'

The infamous Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot has escaped from Cambodia to avoid facing an international court for his crimes against humanity, Cambodian newspapers said yesterday.

Pol Pot was said to have escaped with assistance from China, though the Chinese embassy in Phnom Penh denied the reports and government officials dismissed them as propaganda from opposition forces.

The pro-government newspaper *Koh Santepheap* said Pol Pot had escaped from the rebels' jungle base of Angkor Veng. The newspaper said the Khmer Rouge defence chief Ta Mok had met Chinese diplomats at about the time of the escape. The opposition newspaper *Udom Kateak* said the Chinese wanted Pol Pot to avoid trial because they had backed his 1975-79 "killing fields" regime.

— Reuters, Phnom Penh

Indian right looks set for poll victory

India will hold elections over four days beginning 16 February, the chief election commissioner said yesterday.

Early opinion surveys have indicated the right-wing Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party will win the most seats, though no party is expected to get a majority. The BJP was to launch its campaign later yesterday with a rally in Bombay.

No party won a majority in the last elections in May 1996, and ideological differences and competing ambitions kept the main blocs from working together. New voting had to be called three years early after the Congress Party withdrew support from the governing United Front coalition, accusing one of its members of supporting Sri Lankan guerrillas linked to the 1991 assassination of Congress leader and former prime minister, Rajiv Gandhi.

— AP, New Delhi

Land of the Free cracks down

A ban on smoking in California bars is not the only lifestyle-cramping law that went onto the statute book of American states with the New Year.

Under-18s in California will have to secure their parents' permission before having any part of their body pierced, while waiting car alarms will make drivers' cars liable to be towed away after 20 minutes, rather than 45 at present.

In New York state, drivers who kill or injure a cat will have to report the accident and face a fine of up to \$100 for not doing so. The change gives cats parity with dogs. Also in New York, the fines on owners of dogs that bark too loudly or too long have been trebled - to \$525.

— Mary Dejevsky, Washington

Kenya opposition claim Moi cheated

Kenya's main opposition parties yesterday accused President Daniel arap Moi of using fraud to win the election after early results pointed to a fifth term. But the opposition party leaders said they would reject such a result.

Kenyan television reported that unofficial counts from 60 per cent of the seats showed Mr Moi had won 1,466,868 votes against 1,009,186 for his nearest rival, Mwai Kibaki of the Democratic Party.

Mr Moi needs 25 per cent of the vote in five of Kenya's eight provinces to win, failing which he will face a run-off against the second-placed candidate. The early results also suggest that Mr Moi has increased his vote since the last elections in 1992.

— Ed O'Loughlin, Nairobi

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صحن من الامل

Amnesty offers Italy chance to forget its years of terror



Terrorist generation: Red Brigades members Gabriella Mariani and Adriana Faranda on trial in connection with Aldo Moro's kidnapping in 1978 (they are now free after serving 12 years). Right: the discovery of Moro's body Photographs: AP

For Christmas this year, Italy's President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro decided to pardon six people involved in the Red Brigades terrorist group in the 1970s. The gesture was intended to encourage parliament to declare a general amnesty for terrorist offences. Andrew Gumbel explains why everyone has an interest in forgetting one of the darkest chapters in Italy's post-war history.

Six months ago, the radical left-wing political science professor Toni Negri made an extraordinary decision. After 14 years living comfortably in Paris as a fugitive from Italian justice, he decided to come home and face a 30-year jail sentence.

His crime, at least according to the charge sheet, was inciting his students at Padua University to terrorist violence back in the 1970s. Professor Negri has always denied the charges, and his case has provoked strong criticism from Amnesty International and others. But he chose to go to jail to become a living symbol of Italy's need to come to terms with the multiple injustices of the terrorist period. He declared he was willing to admit he had made mistakes—even if they were not criminal ones—and hoped the Italian state would be magnanimous enough to do likewise and declare an amnesty.

Six months on, Professor Negri is still in Rebibbia prison in Rome, but the debate has taken on greater urgency. A parliamentary committee has drafted a law that would trim jail sentences for terrorist offences far enough to free most of the 180-odd people still being punished for their crimes. Politicians on all sides have spoken of the need to put the dark days of the late 1970s behind them and acknowledge that the terrorists no longer pose a threat.

And now President Scalfaro has exercised his prerogative to pardon six minor *brigaisti*—none responsible for shedding blood—still caught in the judicial wringer. "It's realistic to think," said the senior left-wing

politician, Pietro Folena, "that by the year 2000 our country will have closed its accounts with the Years of Lead."

But why should Italy consider pardoning a generation of terrorists that, from 1969 to 1981, blew up banks and railway stations, killed dozens of policemen, magistrates and journalists, and carried out the audacious kidnapping and murder of Aldo Moro, the leader of the Christian Democrat party? Part of the reason is a cultural reflex: the desire not to exacerbate social divisions through revenge, but rather to adhere to the Catholic tradition of forgiveness (interestingly the Italian word being used for the terrorist amnesty, *indulto*, is by origin a Church term referring to a special dispensation from the tenets of canon law).

Part of the reason is an acknowledgement that terrorists,

starting with an attack on a bank in Piazza Fontana in Milan in 1969, were right-wing in inspiration and intended to counter the rising fortunes of the Communist Party. Evidence has emerged that parts of the political elite and secret services devised a deliberate "strategy of tension" to deter the public from voting the Communists into power. But the precise chain of responsibilities has never been established, and even the identities of the bombers have never been adequately proven.

The Red Brigades and other violent leftist groups emerged as a reaction to the right-wing terrorists and to the state's crack-handed attempts to blame the early bombings on left-wing anarchists. There are suspicions that parts of the Christian Democrat party allowed Moro to be killed rather than negotiating for his release because they did not approve of his policy of rapprochement with the Communists.

The murkiness also spread into the judicial system. Professor Negri is just one celebrated case of suspected miscarriage of justice. Three left-wing activists to jail for the murder of a Milan police officer in the early 1970s are also widely believed to be innocent, victims of a judicial process that has been likened to the Spanish Inquisition.

Because of Italy's system of plea-bargaining, a number of Red Brigades murderers got off relatively lightly while others further down the pole of responsibility have languished in jail for years.

An amnesty is a convenient way of closing the lid on all of these horrors. Significantly, one of the most ardent champions of the *indulto* is the former state president, Francesco Cossiga, a man linked to myriad scandals of state involvement in subversive acts. During the Moro kidnapping he was interior minister and thus directly responsible for the decision whether or not to negotiate with his party leader's captors.

The amnesty's passage through parliament requires a two-thirds majority. It could be scuppered by political concerns: the party headed by the former prime minister, Silvio Berlusconi, wants to link an amnesty on terrorism to an amnesty on the recent wave of corruption scandals in which Mr Berlusconi is deeply implicated. The one could easily cancel out the other.

In the wrangling, the concerns of the families of terrorist victims have gone virtually unheeded. Unlike France, Italy has no mechanism for providing compensation or any kind of state help to bereaved relatives. An amnesty may relieve a lot of troubled consciences, but nobody has yet had the courage to say sorry for the murky violence of the past.

DECADE OF VIOLENCE

The 1970s are known as Italy's Years of Lead—a reference not only to the bullets that flew with alarming regularity, but also to the oppressive atmosphere that weighed down the whole country. These are some of the key events of those years:

December 1969: Bomb destroys the Banca Nazionale dell'Agricoltura in Piazza Fontana in Milan, killing 16 people. Although initially blamed on the left, this was the work of right-wingers intended to scare resister factory workers out of launching a Communist revolution.

1974: Bomb kills eight at a demonstration in Brescia; later in the year a train bombing in a tunnel near Bologna kills 12 more. Both are the work of right-wingers.

1976: Red Brigades commit first murder, of Genoa state prosecutor Francesco Coco (right). Nearly 100 more killings follow over the next four years.



1978: Red Brigades kidnap Aldo Moro, architect of the stillborn 'historic compromise' with the Communists, near his home and kill his bodyguards. After a tense 55 days, his corpse is found in the back of a car at a spot equidistant from the Rome headquarters of the Christian Democrat and the Communist parties.

1980: Right-wing bomb kills 85 at Bologna railway station. The same year, captured Red Brigades members begin to co-operate with the police, leading to the dismantling of the group and the end of the Years of Lead.

particularly the left-wing variety, were treated far more harshly by the judicial system than common criminals would have been for similar offences; in other words, there was no explicit political element to their punishment.

But perhaps the most compelling, if least advertised, reason to put the events of the 1970s to rest is the culture of bad faith, hatred, conspiracy and violence that enveloped the entire country during the period—leading to subversive acts committed not only by a handful of political ideologues but by magistrates, politicians and intelligence officers, too. Enough scandals have emerged from the period to implicate large chunks of the state structure in illegality and violence.

The first wave of bombings,

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	£10,000+	4.50%	3.60%		£10,000+	5.70%	4.56%	
	£5,000+	4.05%	3.24%		£5,000+	5.32%	4.25%	
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	£10,000+	5.85%	4.68%		£10,000+	6.74%	5.39%	
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£500+	4.20%	3.36%						
90 DAY NOTICE ACCOUNT Interest paid monthly.	£100,000+	6.46%	5.16%	PREMIER TESSA (FOLLOW UP) (Issues 1 & 2) (No longer available).	£9,000+	7.25%		
	£50,000+	6.17%	4.94%		£5,000+	6.95%		
	£25,000+	5.94%	4.75%		£3,000+	6.95%		
	£10,000+	5.70%	4.56%		£500+	5.15%		
	£5,000+	5.32%	4.25%		£1+	1.00%		
	£2,500+	4.60%	3.68%					
£500+	4.12%	3.30%						
ONE YEAR OPTION BOND Variable (Issue 1) Rate Options paying interest annually.	£100,000+	7.10%	5.68%	FULLY PAID SHARE (Rates also apply to Cheshunt Investment Share, Cheshunt Clubs, Cheshunt Ex-Thrift and Cheshunt Subs. Share, all no longer available).	£50,000+	3.15%	2.52%	
	£50,000+	7.10%	5.68%		£25,000+	3.01%	2.41%	
	£25,000+	7.00%	5.60%		£10,000+	2.72%	2.17%	
	£10,000+	6.95%	5.56%		£5,000+	2.37%	1.90%	
	£5,000+	6.80%	5.44%		£2,000+	2.08%	1.66%	
ONE YEAR OPTION BOND Variable (Issue 1) Rate Options paying interest monthly.	£100,000+	6.88%	5.50%	SELECT (No longer available).	£500+	1.29%	1.03%	
	£50,000+	6.88%	5.50%		£1+	0.20%	0.16%	
	£25,000+	6.78%	5.43%					
	£10,000+	6.74%	5.39%		£50,000+	3.20%	2.56%	
	£5,000+	6.60%	5.28%		£25,000+	3.05%	2.44%	
TESSA PLUS	£3,000+	7.05%			£10,000+	2.75%	2.20%	
	£500+	5.55%			£5,000+	2.40%	1.92%	
	£1+	1.50%			£2,000+	2.10%	1.68%	
					£500+	1.30%	1.04%	
TESSA TWO (FOLLOW UP) (Issues 1 & 2)	£9,000+	7.25%			£1+	0.20%	0.16%	
	£5,000+	6.95%		(Rates also apply to Bonus Bond Select and Balanced Bond Select). In addition, also applies to the following accounts which are no longer available: High 30, HiLife, Overseas 3 Month Capital Account, Overseas Prime Access account (†), Cheshunt Foreign 90, Cheshunt Instant Access, Cheshunt Foreign Instant, Cheshunt Instant Gross, Cheshunt Charity Instant, Ex Aid to Thrift, Guaranteed Investment Account Issues 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 & 19. No 1 Capital (†), Triple Bonus (†), Bristol Plus, Moneylink, Snoopy, Guaranteed Equity Bond 3 Year Issue 1, Balanced Guaranteed Equity Bond 1 Year Issues A, B, C, D, E & F, Guaranteed Equity Bond 5 Year Issues 1, 2 & 3, Bonus Interest Bond Issue 1, Capital Maker Bond, Premier Save Bond Issues 1, 2 & 3, 4, 5 & 6, Escalator Bond Issue 3 (3 years), Fixed for Six Bond Issues 1 & 2, Bonus Return Bond Issues 1 & 2, Bonus Interest Bond Issues 2 & 3, Bonus Bond Issue 2, Secure Investment Account Issue 3 & 4, Premier Option Bond all Issues Fixed and Variable, Premier Twelve Fixed Issue 1, 1 Year Option Deposit Bond Fixed Issues 1 & 2 and Balanced Guaranteed Equity Bond 1 Year Deposit Issues 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5, Capital Protection Growth Bond Issue 1 and Guaranteed Equity Bond Plus Issue 1, Intermediary Balanced Guaranteed Equity Bond 1 Year Deposit Issue 1, Year Plus Bond Issues 1 & 2, Base Rate Tracker Bond Issue 1.	£50,000+	3.15%	2.52%	
	£3,000+	6.95%			(No longer available) Rates also apply to High 30 Monthly Income, Cheshunt Instant Income, Overseas Monthly Income (†), No 1 Income (†), Triple Bonus Monthly Income (†), Premier Option Bond all Issues (Monthly Income) Fixed and Variable, Escalator Bond Issue 3 (Monthly Income), Premier Twelve Issue 1 (Monthly Income) and Year Plus Deposit Bond Monthly Income Issues 1 & 2, all no longer available.	£25,000+	3.01%	2.41%
	£500+	5.15%			£10,000+	2.72%	2.17%	
			£5,000+		2.37%	1.90%		
			£2,000+		2.08%	1.66%		
			£500+		1.29%	1.03%		
			£1+		0.20%	0.16%		
(1-6 Withdrawals)	£100,000+	5.00%	4.00%	SPECIAL MONTHLY INCOME (No longer available) Rates also apply to High 30 Monthly Income, Cheshunt Instant Income, Overseas Monthly Income (†), No 1 Income (†), Triple Bonus Monthly Income (†), Premier Option Bond all Issues (Monthly Income) Fixed and Variable, Escalator Bond Issue 3 (Monthly Income), Premier Twelve Issue 1 (Monthly Income) and Year Plus Deposit Bond Monthly Income Issues 1 & 2, all no longer available.	£50,000+	3.15%	2.52%	
	£50,000+	5.00%	4.00%		£25,000+	3.01%	2.41%	
	£25,000+	4.75%	3.80%		£10,000+	2.72%	2.17%	
	£10,000+	4.50%	3.60%		£5,000+	2.37%	1.90%	
	£5,000+	4.05%	3.24%		£2,000+	2.08%	1.66%	
	£2,000+	3.50%	2.80%		£500+	1.29%	1.03%	
(More than 6 Withdrawals)	£1,000+	3.00%	2.40%		£1+	0.20%	0.16%	
	£500+	2.80%	2.24%					
PREMIER PLUS CAPITAL ISSUE 1 Three months notice required for withdrawal (Rates also apply to Guaranteed Investment Account Issue 5 and Guaranteed Investment Account Extra Issues 1 & 2). (No longer available).	£100,000+	6.65%	5.32%	BALMORAL HIGH INTEREST ACCOUNT (No longer available) (Also Balmoral Fixed Rate Bond Issue 1 and 2 and Balmoral Limited Edition Bond).	£100,000+	4.65%	3.72%	
	£50,000+	6.35%	5.08%		£50,000+	4.50%	3.60%	
	£25,000+	6.10%	4.88%		£25,000+	4.45%	3.56%	
	£10,000+	5.85%	4.68%		£10,000+	4.15%	3.32%	
	£5,000+	5.45%	4.36%		£2,000+	3.30%	2.64%	
	£2,000+	4.70%	3.76%					
£500+	4.20%	3.36%						
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Irish factory helps eels slither on to the menus of Europe

Cod and chips beware; Ireland is preparing a quiet revolution in seafood with the first guaranteed large-scale supplies of eel.
Alan Murdoch reports.

The eerie, wriggling silhouettes of tens of thousands of dark slithering creatures have a hypnotic effect. To their patient owners at Ireland's first eel factory, who invested countless hours catching them and creating an £800,000 hi-tech habitat, the contents of the giant fibre-glass tanks inspire a mixture of pride and nervous anticipation.

A bold gamble by the new company, Aqua Arklow in County Wicklow, means 60 to 200 tonnes a year of smoked Irish eels could soon be dished up to consumers in Europe, and possibly Japan. Aided by Ireland's enterprising state fisheries body BIM (Bord Iascaigh Mhara), they may also appeal to the taste buds of Irish and British customers.

Catching them at just 0.3 grammes, Aqua Arklow feeds them up to 150 grammes, when they are ready for eating. Under a forward-thinking plan agreed with fisheries au-

thorities, Aqua then returns to lakes and rivers a larger proportion of older, five-to 10-gramme specimens from its original catch than would normally survive in the wild.

The aim is to reverse, in Ireland at least, a 20-year decline in European eel numbers and give Irish fishermen larger wild adult catches than the varying river supplies would allow naturally. Until now, this had thwarted the possibility of a mass market for wild eel. It is not currently possible to breed them in captivity.

In the wild, the eel faces a 50 to 84 per cent mortality rate in its early months. Able to swim forwards and backwards, it can also breathe through its skin and smell food across extraordinary distances.

They spawn in the Caribbean's warm Sargasso Sea before migrating as glass eels to European estuaries. From pigmented "elvers", they grow in to yellow then silver adults, then migrate down-river and south to complete the cycle.

Like most transatlantic voyagers they suffer stress. After the ordeal of grading at the plant they need salt or baking-powder baths to recover their equilibrium.

Catching the tiny glass eels is perhaps

the hardest part of the Aqua's factory process, according to managing director Declan Duggan. Eels move only under particular tidal and weather conditions. "It might be night or day and we have to work around the tides. It's laborious; you can go for two or three trips over 200 miles without catching one. It's very hit and miss," he says.

Locals are fascinated. "They are always asking 'How are the eels?' If it was trout they wouldn't be so interested. But with eels it's like snails and slugs, they're almost afraid of them," he says.

Mr Duggan, 37, used expertise he learned in industrial pipe fitting and heating to good effect. Five years in planning, the sophisticated plant features computerised oxygen and pH controls and a constant 25°C water temperature.

This is essential for nurturing eels to their full 16 inches in six to 18 months, compared with six to seven years in cooler, wild conditions. (Wild eels stop feeding in cold temperatures.)

After seven days of "purging" in clear water, they are transported live for smoking on the Continent. So far not one eel has been lost to disease.



Slippery meal: Aqua Arklow hopes its eels will appeal to European tastes

Photograph: Eamonn Farrell/PhotoC Ireland

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Blair to issue millennium bug warning

Tony Blair will call on business to wake up to the "millennium bug" which could lead to computers crashing at the turn of the century. But Colin Brown, Chief Political Correspondent, says the Government's own house needs to be put in order.

The Prime Minister is said to be "shocked and appalled" at the ignorance of small businesses to the threat posed by the bug and is giving the problem high priority, according to senior government sources.

He has become alarmed at the potential for disaster faced by some firms. His planned "wake-up" call to industry and small businesses early in 1998 will drive home the message that they should make sure their computers are tested and altered to cope with the double zero date, well before the end of next year.

Mr Blair will put the computer problem high on the agenda for Britain's six-month presidency of the European Union, his officials said. "The Prime Minister is

determined that Britain prepares itself and leads the preparations in Europe," said the Government source.

"He is shocked and appalled at the some of the neglect of the problem. One poll showed only 55 per cent of the companies were aware of the implications," the source added.

The Prime Minister's decision to act follows several reports in *The Independent* of the dismay among some experts at the lack of preparation being made in Britain to enable computers to cope with the millennium.

The Government has also insisted that its own computers are being corrected in time to cope with the millennium. A spokesman for the Inland Revenue denied claims by the Liberal Democrat Treasury spokesman, Malcolm Bruce, that its PAYE computers could crash this year. Mr Bruce said the costs for the Government of coping with the bug had escalated to £3bn.

The Government estimated it would cost £370m to deal with computers in central departments, but Mr Bruce said this did not include thousands of computers in other areas of the public sector, including the NHS and transport.

Anger at return of the body-snatchers

Body-snatching is back in fashion. Only this time the snatchers are not Burke and Hare but biotechnologists seeking to exploit the growing market in genes and diagnostic tests. Jeremy Laurence, Health Editor, asks whose body is it anyway?

A series of cases in which scientists have found themselves in conflict with patients over who owns tissue removed from their bodies has highlighted a growing problem that could threaten medical research, two experts in medical law have warned.

Patients have spoken of being "violated" when their body tissue was used without their consent. In one case, John Moore, a patient in California whose tissue was transformed into a commercial cell line and patented without his knowledge or consent, complained of feeling he had been "raped".

In another case, a widow sued a Los Alamos laboratory for severe mental and emotional distress after it had removed three and half kilograms of organs from her dead husband for research.

Professors Lori Andrews of Chicago-Kent College of Law and Dorothy Nelkin of New York University say in *The Lancet* that scientists often see the body and its parts as impersonal objects to be used for research and commercial development, and with the advent of biotechnology human tissue has become a raw material.

"Body parts are extracted like a mineral, barvested like a crop, mined like a resource. Cells, embryos or tissue can be frozen, banked ... patented, bought or sold."

They compare the body-snatching of the 18th century, whose most notorious practitioners were Burke and Hare who murdered individuals to sell to Dr Knox's anatomy school in Edinburgh, with the activities of scientists today. "Pathologists routinely analyse tissue samples without obtaining consent. Researchers try to commercialise tissue without sharing profits with sources. Objectifying the body enables scientists to extract, use and patent body tissue without reference to the person involved."

Professors Andrews and Nelkin say scientists risk a backlash if they continue to ignore public disquiet about what often appears to be the callous exploitation of human tissue by medical researchers.

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There was nothing on my list about this ...

RESOLUTIONS

THE TIME: 1992

THE PLACE: A LONDON HOSPITAL

The writer Dea Birkett thought she had her whole life planned out ahead of her. Then, out of the blue, she told the truth about her baby daughter.

I am an inveterate list-maker. This is the Day List, which mixes mundane household tasks (buy hypoallergenic washing powder, get toilet fixed again) with work (hassle travel editor to send me somewhere hot to write to publisher about lack of reviews, chase up unpaid expenses). The first item on the Day List is always "plan day" (title for "writing a list"), so as soon as the list is written, I can cross out the top line. The Week List contains more substantial work commitments: write book review, finish chapter seven; return proofs.

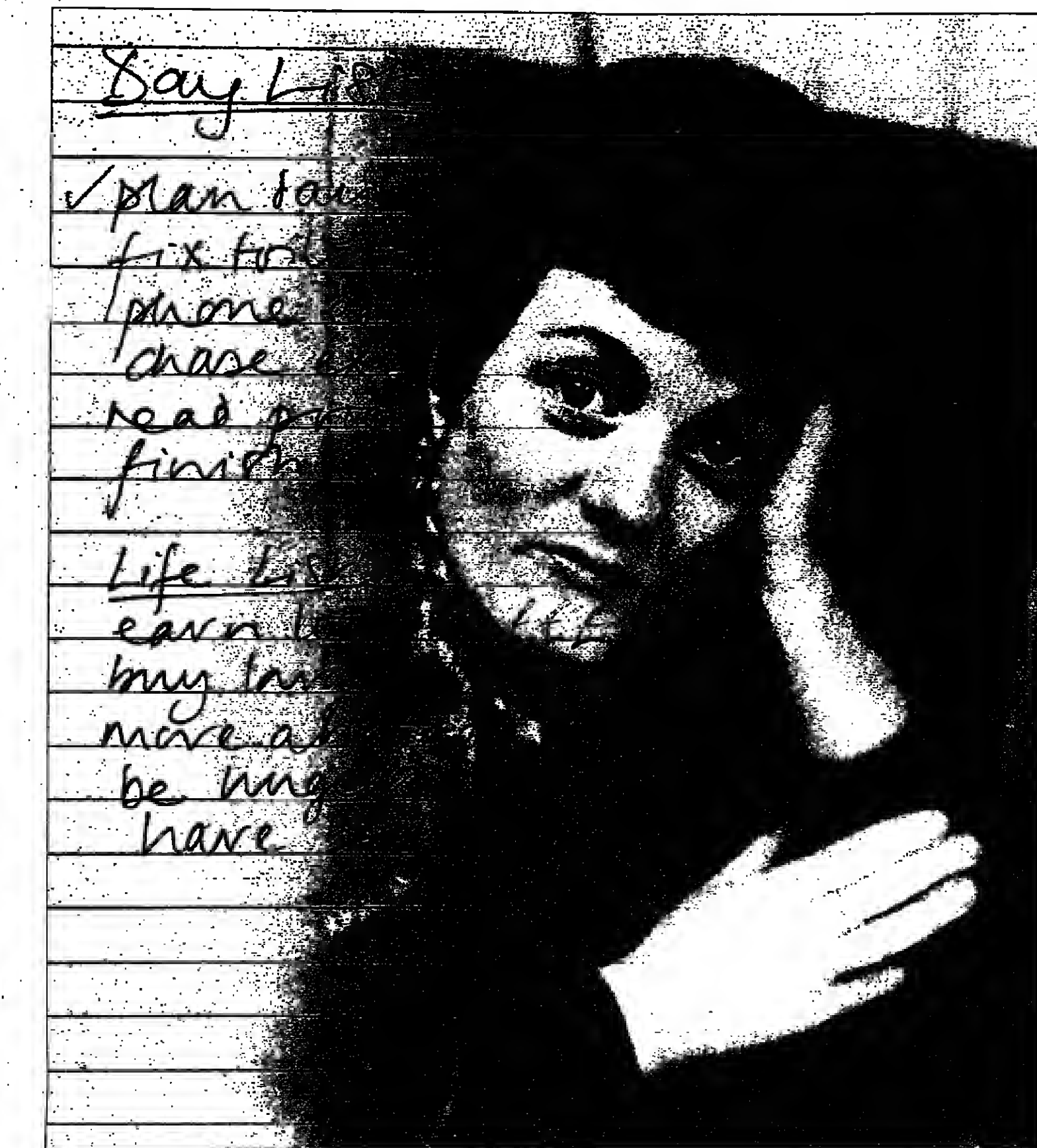
The most important list of all was the Life List: earn loads of money; spend half the year abroad; buy big house in central London; become hugely successful writer by 30. When 3 passed, I drew a fine blue line through that figure and wrote "35"; shortly after my 35th birthday, I put "40". The Life List was my declaration of faith in myself. I was confident that, given time and a little bit of cheating, everything would be ticked off.

In truth, "have a baby" was never on the Life List. But when I reached my early thirties, other women of my age were having children, my boyfriend was certain that he wanted a child, and, once the decision was made, it happened that night. Already pregnant, I sneaked "have a baby" on to the list in retrospect and pretended it had been there all along. Never a matchy person, I imagined motherhood would be the first club to let me in.

Being pregnant was a blessing to a listophile. There are all those things you aren't supposed to eat (pinned up in a list above the fridge in the kitchen); the endless appointments at antenatal clinic, breast-feeding and breathing-in-labour classes; the birth plan (just a glorified list); and the list of those things to take with you into hospital (bags of ice, towels, birthing stool, electric fan, sandwiches, book on how to give birth).

Child-rearing itself seemed to promise a wealth of new list-compiling possibilities, around which my day, week and life could be structured. Most tasks were so simple, such as buying pink-edged Pampers, that they could be easily deleted with a great flourish of satisfaction. My prenatal appointments were replaced by my daughter's weekly weighing sessions, 10-week check, three-month check. At the three-month check, she seemed a little floppy. I added "Buy Penelope Leach and Miriam Stoppard" to the Day List; they should be able to help with handy hints as to how to cure floppiness. List-writing and motherhood were meant for each other. Then, six months after my daughter was born, the Life List stopped.

There had been suspicions about my daughter's condition for some time. But then, who isn't worried about their first baby? Maybe, if I had been 19, I'd have put her in a frilly pink dress, tied her non-existent fuzz of hair in tiny ribbons, put



a bottle into her mouth and carried on carelessly. Only my older mothers make such a song and dance about bringing up baby. Friends were also having concerns about their newborns - one's son wasn't putting on enough weight, another's daughter had ghastly projectile vomiting. My daughter's floppiness was just another focus for an over-anxious mother in her mid-thirties.

'Your daughter will always be a disappointment to you,' he said. It was the cruellest thing anyone has ever told me

But soon, there were several appointments a week with specialists which other babies were not having. At yet another one, my daughter was sitting on my lap as we discussed whether she was old enough to supplement her milk with some juice, when the consultant said, in such a throwaway manner that I only just caught the words, "Of course, your daughter has cerebral palsy." Strangely, the words I remember most are not the cold, clinical diagnosis, but the "of course". Of course?

There was no "of course" about it. Cerebral palsy wasn't on the list.

Cerebral palsy is a condition which affects a child's motor abilities. If you are born with cerebral palsy, you will always have it. The degree to which a child is affected varies from so mild it passes unnoticed, to near-total impairment. It seemed that my daughter would be somewhere in the middle. The consultant added, "She will always be a disappointment to you." It is the cruellest thing that anyone has ever said to me. It is also a lie.

But from that moment, my life diverged from the way of the lists. It was as if I had been following some roughly mapped route and, suddenly, the car swerved wildly and I began to plough through a terrain I had never intended to venture into. When a baby is diagnosed with cerebral palsy, it is unclear where in this foreign land of disability she will fall. Low expectations of children with cerebral palsy - as with all children with disabilities - inevitably encourage such children to underachieve. My daughter might do all sorts of things - and she might not. There would be no certainties. The only lists I could write were those by the day or week. When I tried to construct a Life List, it dissolved into daily tasks. I could no longer imagine what lay ahead.

We all have unwritten lists: we all make presumptions about what the future will hold. As adults, we live for an articulated future, some blueprint we keep secret from even ourselves. Life would be intolerable otherwise: we have to think that things will go on. Without realising it, I had had a clear assumption of how my child would turn out. Much has come true - she eats ice-cream like face-paint, chats endlessly, gossips with her girlfriends and says that, when she grows up, she wants to be a witch. But it never occurred to me that alongside these delights, she would never climb trees, never run a race, never walk to the shops. These items on my Life List, so deeply assumed that I had never written them down, were suddenly erased. I felt as if the skeleton on which the flesh of my life rested had been cut out of me.

Other people talked of our "tragedy". Friends came and grasped my hands, saying they were "so sorry", as they shook their heads from side to side, looking very concerned, slightly ridiculous and horribly sad. I looked back at them, and wondered who and what they were talking about. I did not feel like a tragic heroine, a nobly suffering parent of a child with problems. I felt like a mum. But I realised, then, that the hordes of mothers I expected to be part of would never embrace me. I was different. I was touched.

Five years have passed since the diagnosis. I still search for that inclusion: I still long to belong. When I meet a parent of an able-bodied child, I know that, as she looks at me and my child, she is staring at her worst nightmare. She both pities and is afraid of us. She is so glad she is not me; she is so glad I am the afflicted one, because there can only be so many of us, and, thankfully, the devil's finger has hovered above my head.

The fear of us is so great that we are written out of the able-bodied world. Wherever I look, my child and I are not there. Reluctantly tackling Toys "R" Us this Christmas, I was the only mother who couldn't see anyone who looked just a little bit like her child grinning cheekily out from the ramparts of packaging. There are no pictures of my daughter in children's magazines, no stories with handicapped heroines, no Teletubbies with wobbly legs and wheelchairs. I now realise, after five years, that the reason I could not imagine our life was because I had never seen it before. However wild all the dreams on my Life List might have been, there was always a real-life example I had come across. I had never had to encounter disability; it had been hidden from me, too.

Now I search out visions of my daughter and myself. When, in Toys "R" Us, I spotted Mat-

tel's latest product - Barbie's new friend Becky, splendid in her sparkly pink wheelchair - my heart momentarily soared. But on Becky's box is a charitable slogan - "Share a Smile" - the only such slogan on any toy in the store. My child is always an object of pity. And, as if the wickedness of real life must intrude even into toyland, Becky's wheelchair does not fit through the door of Barbie's dream house.

On my daughter's Christmas list was Becky. Maybe she'd get her, maybe she wouldn't. Writing something down makes it no more real than Santa Claus. However many lists you write, it can't prevent that lone thunderbolt striking. My daughter's disability has been liberating. I now know that nothing is meant to be, no blueprint can be tattooed on to the enigmatising anarchy of our lives. No Life List is written in stone. Other people remain certain: "I'm going to Barbados on holiday next year", "I'm not going to get pregnant for a few months", "I'll be promoted in the summer", "It'll be a wonderful wedding". But when I hear them say such things, I feel sorry for them. Bound by their life's blueprint, the child-like wonder of the world is lost. Don't they know there are no certainties, only hopes?

Dea Birkett is author of *Serpent in Paradise* (Picador, £16.99).



JOHN
LYTTLE

Dear Diary,
Went to Paz's New Year Eve's Party. Possibly. Dazed and confused. Have lost 48 hours and sheer body-stocking. Aunt Sadie sent me for Christmas. Crawled downstairs. Front door off hinges. Mayan temple in garden toppled. Gnomes modelled on members of Hanson Awol. Nipples sore.

Neighbours have left note, dated 1 Jan, threatening to phone Swat team and Anne Atkins. (Left number with them in case of emergencies). Sick as a supermodel after dessert. Did I have a good time?
Forgot annual resolution. Will ponder once vision clears.

Dear Diary,
Later. Found next door's teenage son comatose in basement. Returned him to worried and unattractive pale parents. Many heartfelt tears and promises of physical violence. Last time I babysit for anyone.

Am glad Andrew is at mother's. Footmarks on bathroom ceiling would take some explaining.
Resolve to resolve as soon as police finish dusting for prints.

Dear Diary,
Anne Atkins rang. Hissy fit to burst. Doesn't appreciate hysterical calls from strangers in the dead of night. Told her that's *Telegraph* readers for you. Was shocked to hear her take the Lord's name in vain. Apologised for wasting her time: "Well, your field of expertise is missing daughters, not missing sons." Repented the words the second uttered, despite rehearsing them all morning. Atkins cursed like a drill sergeant and slammed down phone. If only people knew!

Will consider resolution moment Jehovah's Witnesses wake up and leave.

Dear Diary,
Found vile, foul-tasting, green, snake-like thing clogging mouth. Tongue?

Do resolution once former Tory Minister Who Cannot Be Named frees himself from leather harness in kitchen. Would help except hands still shaking. Will just have to ring his wife himself.

Dear Diary,
In words of the Blessed Celine, it's all coming back to me now. Remember frightening other boys at Paz's party by acting out scene in *I Know What You Did Last Summer* where psychopath sneaks into sleeping heroine's boudoir and gives her bad haircut. Can still hear the screams. Then lurched from guest to guest defending 17-year-old son of Cabinet minister caught dealing dope. Really, how else can young put themselves through higher education today? If I were his father I'd blame the Government. Recall reassuring Paz that his new Westwood didn't make him look fat - his fat made him look fat. Never darken doorstep again, etc.

Don't know how I fetched up at Fridge. Do know that when Muscle Mary, whose slingbacks I trod on, shrieked "And who the f*** do you think you are?" I was stumped for an answer. Finally admitted to being Michael Barrymore. Hate multiple choice questions.

Will fix on resolution once tongue specialist completes examination.

Dear Diary,
Lynch mob gather in street. Lurk behind net curtains as ringleader - Mrs Tunney, pensioner from number 45 who's always boasting she lives on Pedigree Chum - works mob into frenzy (something about "burn the witch") and promises of Battenberg slices after. They should use the old cow's rock cakes to break the windows while they're at it.

Dear Diary,
Andrew rang. Demanded to know why house was on BBC evening news. Asked whether national or local. Andrew ballistic. Coming back this instant. Tell him, if he has a second, to stop and purchase a small skip.

Says he's going to kill me.
Mob swelling. Those near end of the queue - it's a very orderly mob - have brought sleeping bags, little Union Jack flags and bomb-making equipment. Makes you proud to be British.
Resolution after I've made riotous assembly tea.

Dear Diary,
Andrew arrived. Scattered mob by telling them *Fergie: Warrior Princess* was starting on telly. World-class rage followed. Was right - footmarks on bathroom ceiling did take some explaining. And why was first-floor larder blocked with Björk CDs? (Dunno. Seemed like a good idea at the time ... a good idea at any time, actually.)

Finally compelled to unhook TV and commit beloved's favourite crime against nature. Bingo. Now sougled up, grunting in sleep and dribbling from mouth. Suddenly feel awfully Marge Simpson: he is truly the wind beneath my duvet. And just look what happens when he leaves me alone. Yawn. Check tongue. Glows in dark. Hmm.

Doh! Wait, wait. Lights on. Nearly forgot. Message/manifesto/motto for new year.
Must spice up my life.

Action Man lives, thanks to photo-technology

It is perhaps every small boy's fantasy to be a soldier - the only dilemma being who gets to pay the hero, and who the enemy. The artist Paul Smith has got around this by using photo-technology - and becoming not just the hero and villain, but also whole platoons of infantrymen.

Smith, whose work from the "Artists Rifles" series has just been bought by that patron of modern art, Charles Saatchi, portrays himself in a variety of battle poses, shooting, stabbing and dying, some of which appear somewhat camp.

"My work is intended to

mock the fantasy notions we have about war and the soldier hero," he explains, in a text accompanying the photographs. "Part of its intention is to illustrate the divide between reality and the romanticised vision one has of battle."

Smith displays what he calls his "constructed fantasies" with reference to what created them - plays, comic books, paintings, documentary photographs and war films.

"Acting as every figure within this work, I have courted the military ideal where there are no individuals, just the unit, brothers in arms," he says.

Smith, who is 28, spent a number of years working as a photographer for the armed forces. His photographs, which he describes as "mainly hand-shakes and medal presentations", were used in two publications for the Army in Germany - *Sixth Sense* and *Forces Echo*.

Occasionally he covered big training exercises - the pictures from which gave him the inspiration for the "Army Rifles" series. These he describes as "opening up the divide between the reality and fantasy of war". Smith says that his first idea of what a soldier should be

came from his toy Action Man: and some of the paintings, which feature Action-Man-like poses - look almost humorous.

But Smith is keen to stress that he would never mock the soldiers themselves.

"I wish to extend my deepest respect to those who have died in the very real mass carnage that war, in all its forms, brings."

Jenny Blvth, curator of the Saatchi Gallery, commented: "Work by young British artists such as Paul Smith confirms that there is life after *Sensation*."

Jojo Moyes



Calendar of world sport 1998

RLD CUP

1. South Korea, Mexico

South Korea v Mexico
Netherlands v Belgium
Belgium v Mexico
Netherlands v South Korea
Belgium v South Korea

ite. Yugoslavia, Iran

Yugoslavia v Iran
Germany v US
Germany v Yugoslavia
US v Iran
Germany v Iran
US v Yugoslavia

England, Tunisia

England v Tunisia
Romania v Colombia
Colombia v Tunisia
Romania v England
Romania v Tunisia
Colombia v England

amaica, Croatia

Argentina v Japan
Japan v Croatia
Argentina v Croatia
Japan v Jamaica
Argentina v Jamaica
Japan v Jamaica

SECOND ROUND

Saturday 27 June: Game 2 (Marseille, 3.30)

Group B winner v Group A runner-up

Saturday 27 June: Game 1 (Paris, 8.0)

Group A winner v Group B runner-up

Sunday 28 June: Game 3 (Lens, 3.30)

Group C winner v Group D runner-up

Sunday 28 June: Game 4 (St Denis, 8.0)

Group D winner v Group C runner-up

Monday 29 June: Game 5 (Montpellier, 3.30)

Group F winner v Group E runner-up

Monday 29 June: Game 6 (Toulouse, 8.0)

Group E winner v Group F runner-up

Tuesday 30 June: Game 7 (Bordeaux, 3.30)

Group G winner v Group H runner-up

Tuesday 30 June: Game 8 (St Etienne, 8.0)

Group H winner v Group G runner-up

QUARTER-FINALS

3 July: Game B (St Denis, 3.30)

Game 2 winner v Game 3 winner

3 July: Game A (Nantes, 8.0)

Game 1 winner v Game 4 winner

4 July: Game C (Marseille, 3.30)

Game 5 winner v Game 6 winner

4 July: Game D (Lyon, 8.0)

Game 7 winner v Game 8 winner

SEMI-FINALS

7 July: (Marseille, 8.0)

Game A winner v Game C winner

8 July: (St Denis, 8.0)

Game B winner v Game D winner

THIRD PLACE PLAY-OFF

11 July: Paris (8.0)

12 July: St Denis (8.0)

(All times BST; local times are local time)



England will be hoping that Alan Shearer is back to full fitness in time to lead their attack in France

JULY

1 Rowing Henley Royal Regatta (to 5)

2 Athletics Paris GP

3 Cricket England v South Africa third Test, Old Traf-

4 Golf US Women's Open, Kohler, Wisconsin, US (to 5);

Murphy's Irish Open, Dublin (to 5)

5 Rugby union South Africa v England, Cape Town

6 Horse racing Coral-Eclipse Stakes, Sandown

7 Canoeing National Sprint Championships Regatta, Not-

8 Angling National Championships Division 3, Milton

9 Cycling British Road Race Championship (Dudley)

10 Athletics Linz (Austria) GP

11 Motorcycling British Grand Prix, Donington Park Super-

12 Modern Pentathlon European Championships, Mill-

13 Equestrianism Royal International Horse Show, Hick-

14 Golf Gullstream Loch Lomond World Invitational, (to

15 Horse racing Ladbrokes Sunbury Cup, Newmarket

16 Swimming National Championships, including Com-

17 Modern Games team selection trials, Sheffield (to 12)

18 Rowing Fisa World Cup, Lucerne, Switzerland (to

19 Cricket B&H Cup final, Lord's

20 Cycling Tour de France (to 2/8)

21 Motor racing British Formula 3 Championship, Silver-

22 Horse racing British Grand Prix, Silverstone

23 Motor racing Irish Oaks, Curragh

24 Motorcycling Superbike World Championship round

25 Croquet Open Championships, Hurlingham (to 19)

26 Equestrianism Great Yorkshire Show, Harrogate

27 Athletics Nice GP

28 Golf Open Championship, Royal Birkdale (to 19)

29 Sailing Cuzco Salk Ship Race, Falmouth

30 Rowing National championships, Strathclyde (to 19)

31 Athletics B&H Games, Oslo

Tennis Davis Cup World Group, second round

AUGUST

1 Sailing Cowes Week (to 8)

2 Archery World Field Championships, Austria (to 10)

3 Angling Nac Women's Champs, Trent & Mersey Canal

4 Golf Curtis Cup, Minnesota (to 2)

5 Motor racing German GP Hockenheim; Auto Trad-

6 RAC British Touring Car Champ, Thruxton

7 Motorcycling Superbike World Championship round

8 Bowls England National Championships for Women,

9 Royal Leamington Spa (to 15)

10 Rowing Junior World Championships, Osterschiem,

11 Austria (to 9)

12 Equestrian Dublin Horse Show (to 9)

13 Athletics Stockholm GP

14 Cricket England v S Africa 5th Test, Headingley (to 10)

15 Golf McDonald's WPGA Championship of Europe,

16 Glenageary (to 9); Czech Open (to 9)

17 Speedway British Individual World Track Racing

18 Championship

19 Football Nationwide league season starts

20 Cycling World Cup San Sebastian Classic

21 Athletics Monte Carlo GP

22 Football Charity Shield, Wembley

23 Hockey European Women's U21 Nations Cup A

24 Division, Belfast (to 16)

25 Squash World Masters Games, Portland, US (to 22)

26 Cricket NatWest Trophy first semi-final

27 Equestrianism Aachen Horse Show, Germany (to

28 16)

29 Football Uefa Cup second qualifying round, first leg

30 Cricket NatWest Trophy second semi-final

31 Football European Cup 2nd qual round, first leg

1 Athletics Zurich GP

2 Equestrianism Hickstead Derby (to 16)

3 Golf US PGA Championship, Seattle, Washington,

4 (to 16); Westabbi Women's British Open, Royal

5 Lytham & St Annes (to 16)

6 Football European Cup-Winners' Cup qual round, first

7 leg

8 Cricket Triangular Tournament South Africa v Sri

9 Lanka, Trent Bridge

10 Athletics Cologne GP

11 Football Premier League season starts

12 Equestrianism British Horse Trials Champi-

13 onships, Gatcombe Park (to 16)

14 Cricket Triangular Tournament England v Sri Lanka,

15 Lord's

16 Motor racing Hungarian Grand Prix, Budapest; Auto

17 Trader RAC British Touring Car Championship, Knockhill

18 Bowls England National Championships for Men, Royal

Leamington Spa (to 29)

2 Cycling World Cup International Classic, Leeds

3 Cricket Triangular Tournament England v South

4 Africa, Edgbaston

5 Athletics European Championships, Budapest, (to 23)

6 Horse racing Juddmonte International Stakes, York

7 Motorcycling Ulster GP (to 22)

8 Horse racing Tote Ebor, York

9 Cricket Triangular Tournament final, Lord's

10 Equestrianism British Show Jumping, Hick-

11 stead (to 23)

12 Golf Compaq Open, Sweden (women) (to 23); Euro-

13 pean Open, Dublin (to 23)

14 Ralliyng Neste Rally, Finland (to 23)

15 Sailing Larga Regatta Week, Scotland

16 Angling National Championships Division 4,

17 Keadby

18 Cycling British circuit race championships, Bury

19 St Edmunds

20 Powerboat racing Poole-Needles Trophy

21 Motor racing British Formula 3 Championship,

22 Pembrey

23 Football Uefa Cup second qualifying round, sec-

24 ond leg

25 Athletics Lausanne GP

26 Cycling World Track Championships, France

27 (to 29)

28 Football European Cup second qualifying round, second

29 leg

30 Cricket England v Sri Lanka one-off Test, The

31 Oval (to 31)

1 Football European Cup-Winners' Cup qualifying round,

2 second leg

3 Golf BMW International Open, Munich (to 30)

4 Motorcycling Marlax GP (to 4/9)

5 Sailing International Festival of the Sea,

6 Portsmouth Harbour (to 31)

7 Athletics Brussels GP

8 Motor racing Belgian Grand Prix, Spa Francor-

9 champs (tobacco sponsorship allowing); British

10 Formula 3 Championship, Donington Park

11 Motorcycling Superbike World Championship, round

12 11, Assen

13 Cycling British Women's Road Race Championship,

14 Corby

15 Motocross British Sidcar World Championship

16 Powerboat racing Cowes Classic

17 Tennis US Open, New York (to 13/9)

18 Rowing World Championships, Cologne (to 6/9)

19 Motor racing Auto Trader RAC British Touring Car

20 Championship, Brands Hatch

SEPTEMBER

2 Athletics Berlin GP

3 Canoeing Flatwater World Championships, Hungary (to 6)

4 Equestrianism Burghley Horse Trials (to 6)

5 Golf Canon European Masters, Switzerland (to 6)

6 Cricket NatWest Trophy final, Lord's

7 Athletics IAAF Grand Prix final, Moscow

8 Rowing World Championships, Cologne, Germany (to 13)

9 Cycling Tour of Spain (to 27)

10 Triathlon Long-distance World Championships, Sado Island,

11 Japan; World Championships, Switzerland (both to 6)

12 Motorcycling Superbike World Championship round 12;

13 Netherlands

14 Golf Home Internationals, Royal Portcawl (to 11)

15 Equestrianism Blenheim Horse Trials (to 13)

16 Golf British Masters (venue tba) (to 13)

17 Commonwealth Games, Malaysia (to 21)

18 Athletics IAAF World Cup, Johannesburg (to 13)

19 Canoeing Slalom World Cup final, Spain (to 13)

20 Horse racing St Leger, Doncaster

21 Angling National Championships Division 1, Thames

22 Motor racing Italian GP Monza; Brit F3 Champ, Thruxton;

23 Auto Trader RAC Brit Touring Car Champ, Oulton Park

24 Mountain biking World Championships, Canada (to 20)

25 Judo Heart of England Championships

26 Hurling All-Ireland final

27 Tennis Samsung Open, Bournemouth (to 20)

28 Football Uefa Cup first round, first leg

29 Football Uefa Cup first round, second leg

30 Football European Champions' League matches

16 Football European Champions' League opening matches

17 Football European Cup-Winners' Cup first round, first leg

18 Golf Trophée Lancôme, France (to 20)

19 Horse racing Timeform Harry Rosebery Trophy, Ayr

20 Golf Solheim Cup, Dublin, Ohio, US (to 20)

21 Ralliyng Indonesian Rally (to 20)

22 Horse racing Gold Cup, Ayr; Irish St Leger, Curragh

23 Cycling Grand Prix des Nations, France

24 Sailing RYA Women's National Champ, Grafton Water (to 20)

25 Croquet All England final

26 Motor racing Auto Trader RAC British Touring Car

27 Championship, Silverstone

28 Angling Boat angling World Championships, Slovenia (to 20/10)

29 Equestrianism Horse of the Year Show, Wembley

30 Arena (to 27)

31 Golf Linde German Masters (to 27)

2 Horse racing Queen Elizabeth II Stakes, Ascot

3 Angling National Championships Division 5

4 Motor racing Luxembourg Grand Prix, Nurburgring;

5 British Formula 3 Championship, Spa-Francorchamps

6 Rugby league Super League season ends

7 Horse racing Filly's Mile, Ascot

8 Athletics World Half Marathon Championships, Zurich

9 Gaelic football All-Ireland final

10 Tennis Grand Slam Cup, Munich (to 4/10)

11 Football Uefa Cup first round, second leg

12 Horse racing Cheveley Park Stakes, Newmarket

13 Football European Champions' League matches

OCTOBER

1 Equestrianism World Games, Italy (to 11)

2 Horse racing Newmarket October meeting, (to 3)

3 Football European Cup-Winners' Cup first round, second leg

4 Judo Welsh Championships, Cardiff

5 Sailing Royal Yachting Association Multihull Youth Champi-

6 onships, Weymouth (to 4)

7 Cycling World Cup Paris-Tours

8 Horse racing Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe, Longchamp

9 Motor racing British Formula 3 Championship, Silverstone

10 Motorcycling Superbike World Championship, round 13, Japan

11 Fencing World Championships, Switzerland (to 11)

12 Cycling World Road Race and Time Trial Championships,

13 Netherlands (to 11)

14 Golf Alfred Dunhill Cup, St Andrews (to 11)

15 Trampoline World Championships, Sydney

16 Ralliyng Rally of Italy, San Remo (to 4)

17 Motor racing Portuguese Grand

Looking at the horizon to see what lies beyond



Don't look now: Softley in Venice, ideal for passionate trysts

The director of *The Wings of the Dove* artfully strips this period film – and its inhabitants – of convention. Nick Hasted meets Iain Softley, the man who likes to work on the edge.

When Iain Softley travels through time, he doesn't want you to notice. In his first film *Backbeat* (1994), he stripped back three decades of Beatles mythology to show their early years as a Hamburg pub band, pulled you in to their primal energy. In his second, *Hackers* (1995), he tried to predict the future, the music and manners of the digital underground 18 months ahead, when the film he was making would open. Soundtracked by the likes of *The Prodigy* and *Leftfield*, swimming in Internet images, it was too prescient, and crashed. Now he's in 1910, with *The Wings of the Dove*, and Helena Bonham Carter. Most directors would be crushed by period trapping. Softley has ripped through them. In its story about a doomed love triangle, of a helpless passion between young people abroad, he saw a story he wanted to tell young people today.

"These films usually have a rather fetishistic, collector's view of the past," Softley observes, doubtless with Merchant-Ivory in mind. "They're usually limited to an older, more genteel audience. *Wings of the Dove* was written by Henry James, a classical author. But the story itself is about young people, it's about people who have sexual desires, frustrations, and are hungry for each other, are hungry for opportunity and life. There's something very

'One of the things that made this period alien to me was the sense that these people were caged in formality'

vibrant about the story. And so the fact that it could be executed in a way that turns off people the same age as the people in it seems perverse."

The casting of Bonham Carter is almost a metaphor for Softley's intentions, her corseted image unbent, literally, in her first nude scene, and in a performance of confused, aggressive desire that already has her tipped for an Oscar. "One of the things that made this period alien to me was the sense that these people were caged, in corsets or etiquette, hats or formal greetings," Softley admits. "But you can sense in the novel that, underneath the veneer of the manners of the age, the same pulses were beating. We've chosen moments which are similar to our time – a girl coming to her boyfriend's apartment unchaperoned, and lying on the bed, or hidden in a lift in the Underground, where characters can grab each other physically."

Softley, a 39-year-old who looks younger, and whose pre-*Backbeat* background was in pop videos, is no Merchant-Ivory manqué. The thing that links his films isn't the fact of their travels through time, but the points at which they align. In *Backbeat*, it was Astrid Kirchherr, the free-thinking female photographer loved by "Fifth Beatle" Stuart Sutcliffe, who engaged him. In *The Wings of the Dove*, too, Bonham Carter's sexuality is at the cusp of what's possible, just ahead of society. In *Hackers*, most daringly, Softley tried to document times just before they happened. In each film he's been drawn to places on the edge, Hamburg or Venice or cyberspace, places of pos-

sibility. It's a tendency he's aware of, a clue to who he is.

"I think people are more alive and interesting if they are at the vanguard of their time, and fight against conventions," he says. "There are moments when there is a sense of things being possible. These ebb and flow, but it's the point when they come to a head that I always want to show. There are always people who are suppressing desire and aspiration. There are always pressures for people to act in a particular way. I'm most interested in characters who question and discover the world for themselves. I think it's an admirable, invigorating human quality."

In *Hackers*, Softley absorbed himself in characters with a sort of second sight, teenagers who could see under the skin of 1990s New York, to the playground of its phone wires. In *Backbeat* and *The Wings of the Dove*, it's the sensual place behind the public veneer that obsesses him. Does he think the official view of culture in any period is necessarily dull, a sort of shell – that there's always an exciting essence underneath? "I think there is in people's heads," he says. "There are times in everybody's life when they've been to a party or a club or a gig, and it's just been magic for a moment, and that's the reason why people listen to music, why it's so pervasive." Is that moment in his films? "I hope so. Because, when it hits me, there's nothing like it."

The sense of swimming against the tide in Softley's characters is close to his heart. When he first tried to break into the film world in the 1980s, his face didn't fit. A product of the West London suburbs, his politely-spoken, middle-class persona wasn't made for times when film-makers were obliged to be, he remembers, "socially or regionally extreme". Wanting to be a film-maker at all was a blow against his background. He remembers a childhood when the excitement of Beatles records and the romance of hitch-hiking to festivals, and of London itself, took hold. But he still felt trapped on a path that would take him straight from school to Cambridge. So he broke away, for a year, and went to France. He didn't phone his parents once. He saw it as an experiment, an attempt to survive on his own. He picked grapes, taught, painted, lived in the Midi, then Paris. "It was interesting to be somewhere where I didn't have any relationship to anybody," he remembers, "and where I didn't know what was going to happen next. It was an attempt to break free. It was an adventure."

The characters in all his films go to places where they're on their own, where they can define themselves. Does he think the step he took by going to France still fuels his work? "I know it does. When I wrote *Backbeat*, I was interested in the sense of arriving in Hamburg, and how no assumptions are made about you, there's no history. I actually went back to Paris to write it. There is something about those journeys, when you have to break out. Something happened to John Lennon and Stuart Sutcliffe when they left the back streets of Liverpool. They wouldn't have become The Beatles if they'd stayed. You define who you are more clearly by going away."

"I remember when I was a child, when I saw the view from the top of a hill, there was always something that fascinated me about it. I always wanted to go to what was over the horizon. It's almost nomadic, that search for something, until you realise that perhaps it's never there. I think that time in your life, when you're travelling and working out what you're going to do with yourself, is a time of great pain, but a time that you look back on as golden as well. There's something tragic about the way we change. The person I was 10 years ago is no longer there. That's in all the stories I'm telling, too."

THE BIG PICTURE



RYAN GILBEY

There should be another term by which we might describe film adaptations of novels that drastically reinterpret the source text. With a picture like *The Wings of the Dove*, the credit "based on the novel by Henry James" just isn't appropriate – it suggests an almost logical progression, as though the ideas and themes contained within the novel were being taken up by the screenwriter in a kind of literary relay race, which patently isn't the case. "Inhabited by the novel by Henry James" would be nearer the mark. You couldn't argue that *The Wings of the Dove* was faithful to its source in any conventional sense, though it displays another sort of loyalty – it feels like a dream about James's novel, rather than an adaptation of it, which is perhaps the only sensible way for a film-maker to approach this most famously interior of writers.

The director Iain Softley (see interview, left) specialises in films about little surrogate families – he made *Backbeat*, which depicted the early days of the Beatles, and *Hackers*, a light comedy about a renegade band of computer nerds. It should be a credit to those earlier pictures, rather than a slur on *The Wings of the Dove*, to say that Softley treats James's trio of tortured souls with the same breezy generosity that he dished out to Lennon and Co, or the cyber-boffs. He has a loose, discreetly daring style that won't upset those viewers who have come to marvel at the posh frocks, but which contravenes the polite objectivity of the traditional costume drama all the same.

Sometimes he can jolt you out of your seat with a single well-timed effect – a soccer ball falls toward the camera, which then switches position to watch it complete its journey to earth: in another scene, two women leaf through pornographic books, and as Softley zooms in on the crude illustrations, their cheeky snickers grow obscenely ram-humorous until you realise that it's actually the premature laughter of the party guests in the next scene that you can hear. The use of sound is also subtly unnerving during a Venetian carnival scene, where the camera prowls across the water, surveying a traffic jam of gondolas in which figures in death masks huddle in the darkness, while the soundtrack comes alive with an urgent percussive rhythm that sounds like a bag of bones being rattled. You can feel Softley's delight in unnerving his audience, though he doesn't always try for a sinister effect – early on, there's a lovely comic edit which is very nearly a Go-dardian jump-cut, where Kate Croy (Helena Bonham Carter) is standing in her lover's doorway one moment, and is sprawled across his bed the next. "Gagging for it" might not be a phrase that cropped up in James's novel, but it's practically flashing in neon above every character in the film.

The picture shifts the action of the novel forward by eight years to 1910, which gives Softley the chance to pull off two key scenes whose visual potential rests on locations and props specific to the era. The film opens in a seedy London Underground carriage, where a cluster of murky brown suits and bowlers is interrupted by the blue plumage on Kate's hat. It may be that this bold effect is only a whisker away from having Kate trot in wearing a plaidum wig and a badge proclaiming "Femmes fatales do it in silhouettes", but the brassiness feels thrillingly rude and devilish.

If Kate's entrance doubles as a statement of intent from Softley, then what follows feels as if he and his screenwriter, Hossein Amini, were scribbling graffiti in the margins of the novel. Kate tempts her lover, the journalist Merton Densher (Linus Roache), into an elevator, where their clench immediately punctures that taut sexual tension that is characteristic of James. As you watch Kate and Merton writhing behind the lift's iron shutters, it becomes clear that Softley and Amini are not prepared to be coy about the extent to which these characters are trapped by passion. The film is full of images of imprisonment, self-imposed or otherwise. There are repeated shots of Merton being denied access to a woman who remains ensconced



A large blue feather to tickle our sensibilities

in her chamber – at the beginning of the picture, he is turned away from Kate's door on the orders of her aunt, who wishes her to wed a more respectable suitor, as Kate watches from her window; later, he receives the same treatment when he arrives to visit Milly (Alison Elliott), the dying American heiress with whom he has travelled to Venice as an unwitting pawn in Kate's get-rich-quick scheme. One of the final shots is of Kate curled naked on Merton's bed, an image which might suggest rehire if it weren't filmed through the bars of the bedstead, transforming Kate's sanctuary into her prison.

There has been a considerable attempt made to blunt the abrasive edges of Kate's personality, though it is to the credit of Helena Bonham Carter that this is not entirely convincing. The screenplay often seems to be preoccupied with fulfilling PR duties on Kate's behalf, but Bonham Carter secures your attention, and even affection, without necessarily being likeable.

She is lit like a skeleton, the severe angles of her cheekbones carving through the stark white light that falls on her face. Even before Kate explicit-

ly reveals her plan to unite Merton and Milly, so that she and Merton may benefit from Milly's will, her most apparently lewdness about it. Having learnt the art of matchmaking from observing the military manoeuvres of her aunt, Kate deposits Merton and Milly in front of Gustav Klimt's *Danaë*, as though the painting itself might act as an aesthetic aphrodisiac. The scene has only been made possible by the screenplay's shift in time – Klimt did not complete the painting until 1908 – but it works against the film's idea of Kate as essentially sympathetic, and actually brings the character closer in line with James's conception of her. The choice of this painting is significant on an immediate level because of the striking resemblance that the flame-haired actress Alison Elliott bears to Danaë – it is as though Kate were inviting Merton to imagine Milly stripped and lost in desire like Danaë, even as the timid Milly herself looks on oblivious, a pathetic gooseberry in her own seduction.

The Wings of the Dove (cert 15) is on general release from today.

ENTERTAINMENT: THEATRE, CONCERTS

Theatre		Concerts	
ROYAL ALBERT HALL OPENS WEDNESDAY 7th JANUARY 1998 NOW EXTENDED TO FEBRUARY 1st tel. 0171 589 8212 C/C: 0171 420 1000		WIGMORE HALL Box Office: 0171 585 2142 Morning: 0171 585 2142 Evening: 0171 585 2142	
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WEDNESDAY 7th JANUARY 1998 8.00pm ALEGRÍA CHOREO BY SOFLEY Directed by Iain Softley		WEDNESDAY 7th JANUARY 1998 8.00pm WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART Symphony No. 40 in G minor K.551 Violin: David Gifford Violoncello: David Gifford Double Bass: David Gifford Piano: David Gifford Conductor: David Gifford	
THURSDAY 8th JANUARY 1998 8.00pm ALEXANDER HARRISON Violin: David Gifford Violoncello: David Gifford Double Bass: David Gifford Piano: David Gifford Conductor: David Gifford		FRIDAY 9th JANUARY 1998 8.00pm ALEXANDER HARRISON Violin: David Gifford Violoncello: David Gifford Double Bass: David Gifford Piano: David Gifford Conductor: David Gifford	
SATURDAY 10th JANUARY 1998 8.00pm ALEXANDER HARRISON Violin: David Gifford Violoncello: David Gifford Double Bass: David Gifford Piano: David Gifford Conductor: David Gifford		SUNDAY 11th JANUARY 1998 8.00pm ALEXANDER HARRISON Violin: David Gifford Violoncello: David Gifford Double Bass: David Gifford Piano: David Gifford Conductor: David Gifford	

To advertise in the Entertainment Section please call David Cutting on 0171 293 2330 or James Knott on 0171 293 2028.

The killers we indulge, and those we don't



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It's the time of year when the baggage of memory gets ransacked. A lot must be left behind, and so, for the sake of health, it should be. Recollection of yesterday's quarrels fades. New paradigms establish themselves. Labour becomes, in Harold Wilson's phrase, the natural party of government by dint of being there and looking comfortable with it (though the latest cabinet papers remind us yet again how unnatural the exercise of power remained for Wilson himself). Yesterday's political villains start to look benign. The lean and hungry Portillos put on weight, metaphorically speaking. One day, even, people will play back their tape of him on election night and sympathise rather than cheer.

Selective amnesia is good mental hygiene, but how to decide what to junk? At what point do we not only forget, but in forgetting start to forgive? The latter half of the 20th century has seen many examples of a curious transformation. Yesterday's freedom fighter, today's statesman.

This process already applies to Northern Ireland. Just before Christmas one of the men convicted for planting the Brighton bomb – which, let's not forget, nearly murdered most of the Cabinet (and crippled Lord Tebbit's wife) – was allowed out of prison on leave. Yet the tabloids' attempt to whip up a storm came to nothing. Most people evidently feel the passage of time has washed away the horror of it. The public's amnesia is, however, highly selective. If some extra-historical "objective" scale of personal culpability could be constructed, Myra Hindley might look no more guilty than other murderers subsequently released well before their dotage. But her crime elicited a special response: it was classified as evil. IRA bombers who conspired to kill and succeeded in killing many more than Hindley go free: to kill for a cause, however questionable, appears to stimulate forgiveness, or at the very least, acceptance.

In Italy, we report today, moves are

afloat to grant indulgence to many of those jailed as a result of the wave of terrorism during the 1970s and early 1980s. Then, in pursuit of the destabilisation of Christian Democrat hegemony, Italian politicians were assassinated (the discovery of Aldo Moro's body in a car boot is still a sharp visual image); public order was assaulted, most memorably by the bomb at Bologna railway station. These crimes – carried out by the extreme right as well as the left – were political. At the time and since, many Italians have believed the state was complicit, that secret service units collaborated in terror. That seems to have generated a public wish for reconciliation. Romano Prodi's centre-left coalition government, the first Italian government in which the participation of Communists has been allowed, even if they now call themselves the Democratic Party of the Left, desperately wants to move away from the robber state which the Christian Democrats and the Socialists presided over.

Amnesty in Italy thus becomes a way of affirming modernisation. But how just does that grand sentiment appear to a relative of one of the Bologna victims? Would an Italian government ever think forgiving of the *mafiosi* that the Italian courts have managed to convict, when their colleagues continue to subvert law and good order across wide swathes of Sicily and Calabria and, still, taint the state itself?

A parallel process has been under way in Germany. There the courts, press and opinion have grappled confusedly with reconciliation in the aftermath of reunification. At the same time a programme of rehabilitation for the political terrorists of the late 1960s and 1970s of the Red Army Faction and the Baader-Meinhof stamp is under way. Ulrike Meinhof may be dead, but her sisterly conspirators emerge from jail, never quite managing to meet the eyes of the relatives of the guards, business people and others they killed. Germany is willing to forget this part of the past, even

though Wolfgang Schäuble, the Christian Democrats' heir apparent, is confined to a wheelchair as a result of terrorist assault.

But how offensive would it be if Germans sought also to forget another part of their past, the one that ended in 1945? Public opinion in Britain, and in the United States, vehemently answers that they must never forget the Holocaust. The trial of Maurice Papon in Bordeaux showed last year that for many in France there is a class of historical crimes for which no statute of limitations can exist, which can never be washed white in the milk of amnesia. But then there are genocides and genocides. Those responsible for mass murder among the trees of equatorial Africa are not disbarred from appearing as national leaders invited to shake the hands of IMF officials and British ambassadors.

Not only do the waters of Lethe run deep, they run also in strange and various channels.

Post letters to Letters to the Editor and include a daytime telephone number. Fax 0171 293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

LETTERS

Blair and Lib Dems

Sir: "What reasons," asks Donald MacIntyre, "would now justify the [Liberal Democrats'] stubborn refusal of [cabinet] office?" ("Why Blair will soon invite Ashdown into the Cabinet", 30 December). Let me give two.

First, the history of coalition governments under a first-past-the-post (FPTP) electoral system shows that, at the subsequent election, the perceived electoral choice is for the government (vote for the larger party) or against it (vote for the opposition). The smaller coalition partner suffers heavily from a loss of its distinct identity. So a coalition could only be based, so far as the Liberal Democrats are concerned, on a cast-iron commitment to a reformed electoral system being in place before the next general election.

Second, Mr MacIntyre answers his own question with his next words: "Blair is now impatient to gather together the collective anti-Tory forces while he is ahead". The worst way forward for British politics would be the combination of a single party containing "all the sensible people" on the one hand and the continuation of a FPTP electoral system on the other, as, by definition, sooner or later some non-sensible party would win.

The better way is to embrace the pluralism inherent in a reformed electoral system, and recognise that there is at present, within British politics, a spectrum of five parties (six in Scotland and Wales), with the Conservatives fundamentally split between the English Nationalists on the one hand and a Christian Democrat-type strand on the other, and the Labour Party divided between the "New Labour" and the "Tyrannosaur Tendency". "Gathering together the anti-Tory forces" under a FPTP electoral system is precisely the opposite of that pluralism.

PHILIP GOLDENBERG
Woking, Surrey

Sir: Derek Cole's claim (letter, 31 December) that Keynes and Beveridge would have opposed the Government's welfare reforms is longer on speculation than on evidence.

Keynes's central insight was that economies were cyclically unstable. He believed the state should try to stabilise economic activity by means of fiscal

policy – with the implication that public revenues and expenditure should balance over the course of the business cycle. In the sixth year of recovery, the Government is, if anything, not being tough enough on public spending to meet the criteria of Keynesian stabilisation policy.

The axiom of the Beveridge Report was that of social insurance, not redistribution: benefits would be funded by contributions and supplemented by a welfare "safety net" for those whose incomes fell below a certain level. There was no plan to establish a structural budget deficit generated by expenditure on an expanding system of welfare entitlements.

The principle of welfare reform is wholly in line with liberal thinking, and is supported by independent-minded figures of both main parties, such as Frank Field and Chris Patten, and of none, such as George Widen and Martin Bell. It is the curious and essentially

reactionary alliance of the Liberal Democrats and the Labour rebels that has abandoned Keynes and Beveridge.

OLIVER KAMM
Bath

Sir: Donald MacIntyre remarks that, like Tony Blair, Lloyd George was "fundamentally unsympathetic to the wastefulness of two parties competing for the same territory in the centre and centre left".

From the Liberal point of view – and over the entire 20th century, Labour's too – it was Lloyd George's arrogance that led to a century of Conservative Party domination. When the trade unionists approached Lloyd George to ask him to prosecute their case in Parliament, he sent them off with no firm commitment. They promptly decided to back Labour. Within a matter of years the Liberal Party was virtually extinguished.

LESLEY ABDELA
London W1

IMF and debt policy

Sir: In her determination to castigate the rich countries for their "immoral" debt policies (Comment, 31 December), Diane Coyle seems to have forgotten that, during the 1980s, more than a half of the Third World's debts owed to the commercial banks were written off as losses.

Because of concerns that this process could in turn undermine the international financial system, much of the energy of the IMF at that time was devoted to arranging rescue packages for the most heavily indebted developing countries.

Since South Korea currently appears to be experiencing a liquidity problem rather than a fundamental imbalance in its external accounts, the IMF is correct in seeking to prevent a financial collapse that could have a domino effect on other Asian countries.

NIGEL WILKINS
London SW7

Sir: What confronts us in South Korea could be seen as two failed imports from the West, namely Communism and capitalism. The first is almost history and there's a lot to be said for dismantling the second.

The capitalist system has trapped us all in a vicious circle in which insatiable demand has become an economic imperative, the alternative being collapse of production and loss of jobs. Hence the rumour is that the Koreans may flood the world with cheap exports to deal with their "over-capacity".

Post-Kyoto, perhaps they can make a virtue out of necessity by offering us a glut of cut-price, low-energy light bulbs.

D W EVANS
Leeds

Equal opportunities

Sir: I write to clarify the Equal Opportunities Commission's position on possible priority for women in the selection of prospective parliamentary candidates.

KAMLESH BAHL
Chairwoman
Equal Opportunities
Commission
Manchester

Sir: Paul Valley may know a lot about religion, but he doesn't know much about irreligion. If his two Christmas articles (20 December) are anything to go by.

Those who have called themselves secularists since the term was adopted in 1851 have not advocated an "emphasis upon individual self-interest" or the "privatisation of morality", let alone "nurtured" "nationalism". And it is nonsense to say that we are "drawing on the moral capital of centuries of a Judeo-Christian tradition in which many of our secular truths find their origin", or that "secular liberalism" has no values.

If there is to be "a constructive debate with secular humanism", as Paul Valley hopes, there must first be proper knowledge of it.

NICOLAS WALTER
Rationalist Press Association
London N1

Secular knowledge

Sir: You quote John Major as asserting that "politicians should never bare their emotions in public" ("Major likens Blair to Uriah Heep", 19 December).

Presumably, in Mr Major's book, irritation and anger at Prime Minister's Question Time do not count as emotions; or maybe he adopted this view when he ceased to be Prime Minister.

LOUIS CAZEAU
Edgware, Middlesex

Suffolk home truth

Sir: As an East Anglian, I am never sure which side of the line we stand in any north/south divide (letters, 27 and 31 December).

May an uninvolved bystander merely mention the old saying "you can always tell a Yorkshireman, but you can't tell him very much". Sadly, this frequently appears to be true.

GEOFFREY ELLIS
Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk

And now, a garlic for America, and a modest proposal for colonial contagion



MILES KINGSTON

Today we bring you the second and final part of our round-up of the events of the coming year. Yesterday we brought you our forecast for January to June, so today, with uncanny precision, we carry on with...

JULY '98. World Cup in full swing in France. Scotland knocked out by losing 6-5 to Jamaica, after leading 5-0 with 10 minutes to go. Scottish manager Craig Brown says: "It's the same old story. We have only ourselves to blame. We had it for the taking. Then we threw it away. I am sick to my boots. I think I am going to commit suicide. At least then I won't be confused with Craig Brown the restaurant writer." Boxer

George Foreman announces another comeback. Tony Blair goes on holiday in Tuscan villa belonging to Spice Girls. First Test drawn.

AUGUST '98. American scientists announce that they have developed a genetically altered garlic plant which tastes of nothing and which will therefore appeal to the American palate. Production of Disney animated version of *The Bible* runs into trouble with ethnic minorities, because there are no black or Asian disciples, and because Jesus does not look Jewish enough. East Anglian house of restaurant writer Craig Brown stormed by angry Scottish football fans, bitter about

ignominious Scots exit from World Cup. When informed of error, Scots fans apologise and say: "We got it wrong. It's the same old story. Sorry about that." John Major announces his comeback.

SEPTEMBER '98. American scientists announce they have developed a genetically altered tomato which will automatically fall apart in slices when picked, or even into fancy shapes. Tony Blair goes on holiday in Millennium Dome. American promoter Don King says that if the money is right, he will stage a spectacular George Foreman v. John Major comeback special. Many East German athletes are stripped retrospectively of

their Olympic medals after massive steroid abuse in the 1970s and 1980s is proved. Some British athletes who trailed in fourth and fifth get gold and silver. David Coleman breaks down in tears of joy.

OCTOBER '98. A new, genetically improved strain of bird flu reappears in Hong Kong. It is not being passed on by poultry as no poultry are left alive in Hong Kong. Therefore it is being passed on by humans. Therefore all humans in Hong Kong should be slaughtered, say world chicken lobby. No decision taken. "If our policies are right, I see no reason why we should not defeat Mr Foreman's outmoded vision," says John Major. "I'll murder him," says Foreman. Ffion Hague gives birth to twins, Fred and Frieda. More controversy over Disney's Bible film – Pope criticises Disney decision to omit Crucifixion and to have God played by Robin Williams as a Jewish father. ("You want to be a what? A saviour of the world? My son, the saviour? What kind of career is that for a bright boy?" etc etc).

The *Titanic* is finally raised, amid huge publicity. Unfortunately, as it is being towed back to New York at night, it is struck by an unseen iceberg and sinks. Tony Blair invites Sir Elton John to join the Cabinet. "Money cannot buy his sort of

experience," he says. "Oh yes, it can," says Elton John. Manchester United loses for the first time in season. "These are early days," says Alex Ferguson. John Major breaks a fingernail in training and the big fight is postponed. American scientist claims that obesity helps to prevent heart attacks. Russian scientist proves that the 21st century has already started. Spice Girls threaten to make comeback.

DECEMBER '98. The Blessed Virgin Mary appears to a Portuguese peasant girl in a vision and tells her that she is, on balance, in favour of a single European currency, though there are bound to be

teething problems. Tony Blair goes on holiday in halloon belonging to Richard Branson. Scientists discover a new strain of flu bug which flourishes only in cars caught in traffic jams on the M25. Tony Blair defends his decision to invite Father Christmas to join Cabinet by saying: "Money cannot buy his experience of winter retail trade cycles." Blessed Virgin Mary reappears to peasant girl and urges her to get linked up to the Internet, as reappearing in these visions really takes it out of her. George Foreman falls asleep in third round. John Major disqualified for incessant talking. Snow. Floods. Last minute Christmas shopping, 1999 starts.

Two wedding
it's back in fa

KATHY
MARKS
DANIEL
HUTCH

Two weddings and it's back in fashion



KATHY MARKS
JO AND HELEN
SAY 'I DO'

It would be difficult to find two less likely converts to the state of wedded bliss than the actress Helen Mirren and the comedian Jo Brand. Mirren, despite her legions of middle-aged admirers, always said she was not the marrying type. Brand has built a career around venomous sideswipes at the male of the species. Yet both, to general astonishment, took the plunge over the festive season.

Mirren wed her partner, the film director Taylor Hackman, in a remote church in the Scottish Highlands on New Year's Eve. Brand reportedly told friends via a line in their Christmas cards that she had just tied the knot with her boyfriend, Bernie Bourke, a psychiatric nurse.

Two very different women have become unexpected standard-bearers for the institution of marriage, bucking the trend of long-term decline in the number of couples prepared to tie the knot. What made Mirren recant, at the age of 51, after 12 years of cohabitation with Hackman? What was it that prompted Brand to hoist the white flag and agree to share her bed with the enemy?

None of the conventional reasons apply. Neither of these successful and independent women needed a mate to provide a home, a *raison d'être* or financial security. Living in sin lost its stigma long ago. Nor are there children on the scene, the advent of which often acts as an incentive for couples in long-term relationships to renounce their ideological resistance to marriage. Mirren is well past child-bearing age and Brand, as far as one knows, is not pregnant.

Mirren's case is particularly interesting because it reflects a growing perception that a small social revolution is stirring. Despite the gloomy statistics, despite the number of times that marriage's obituary has been written, there is anecdotal evidence that the wedded state is creeping back into fashion. Couples, particularly older couples who may have been together for more than a decade, are confounding their friends by slipping away to the register office and plighting their troth.

According to Oliver James, the clinical psychologist, hostility towards marriage is rooted in the parental example. If you abhor the values espoused by your parents, you reject the institution that they represent. But as people mature, he says, they tend to soften and grow more tolerant, and may end up emulating the generation that they once despised. At 39, Brand, despite her bawdy, man-hating image – one of her gags is "never trust a man with testicles" – is past the stage of youthful rebelliousness. Her own parents split up about 20 years ago. She had only been seeing Bourke for about a year but, like many offspring of broken homes, she may have craved the security conferred by a public affirmation of love and commitment. Perhaps the ticking of her biological clock had begun to deafen her. Maybe at heart she is just an old-fashioned, middle-class girl.

Mirren, who seems to grow more alluring with every year that passes, told the American magazine *People* only two months

ago that she could never see herself wearing a wedding ring. Not married before, and with no children, she was once quoted as saying: "I think marriage is a miraculous and wonderful thing. But, like lobster, it's just not to my taste. I don't see what everyone gets so excited about." Hackford, who shares a home with her in Los Angeles, had also said that he saw no need for nuptials.

Then they went ahead and did it after all. Perhaps Mirren, voted the sexiest woman on television earlier this year by *Radio Times* readers, held out for so long because, aware of her physical charms, she never felt the need to grab the first good man on offer. Maybe, given the soaring divorce rate, she feared failure – or, like many happily cohabiting couples, was anxious that marriage would change things, exert new and dangerous pressures that would end up wrecking a successful relationship.

Why walk up the aisle, in the face of so many compelling reasons to avoid that perilous trip? Virginia Ironside, *The Independent's* agony aunt, believes that some couples opt for marriage after years of living together in order to spice up a mundane relationship. "It's saying: 'let's take another risk with our lives together, let's get even closer,'" she says.

The prognosis for such couples is, unfortunately, not rosy. Men and women who tie the knot after living together are far more likely to get divorced than those who dive



Here come the unlikely brides:
Helen Mirren (top) and Jo Brand

straight into wedlock. Virginia Ironside thinks that some underestimate the impact that getting married will have on their lives. "It's a huge step," she says. "People don't take account of the enormous difference that marriage makes to a relationship. The outside world sees you in a very different light, and you're not prepared for that."

Mirren and Brand have decided to ignore the doom merchants, and are instead taking their cue from the ancient Greeks. For, as one passage in Homer's *Odyssey* has it: "There is nothing nobler or more admirable than when two people who see eye to eye keep house as man and wife, confounding their enemies and delighting their friends."

Why did these two women decide to get married at this point in their lives? Perhaps no one ever asked them before.

They're so out of it they can't face reality (the law-makers, that is)

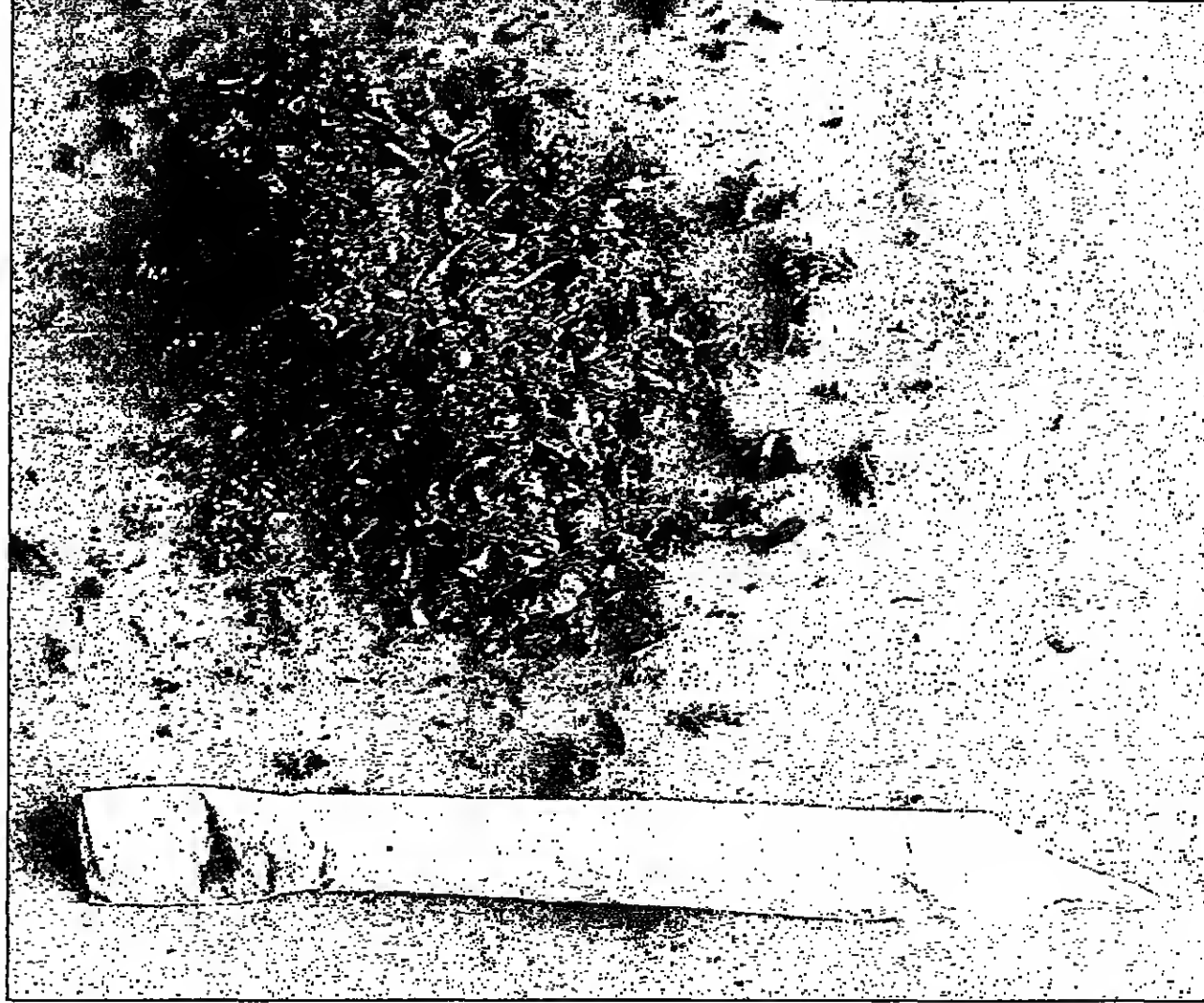


SUZANNE MOORE
A STATE
OF DENIAL

Here I am back in the land of freedom and reason, having just returned from a few days in Iceland (a real nanny state), and what do I find but an unbelievable muddle about a ten-quid deal in a pub. It all makes me want to inhale. Inhale, as in a sharp intake of breath. I realise, of course, that even to use the word is controversial in these zero-tolerance days. If you ask me – and why would you, when my mind has been addled by substances that cabinet minister X's son can only dream about – Tony Blair's joke that unlike Clinton, had he smoked dope he would have inhaled reveals him to be not a great wit, but something of a social outcast.

Obviously, had any member of the Cabinet ever inhaled, they would not be doing the good works that they are now, such as swiping money from lone mothers. Instead they would be kicking their doors down to nick their videos. Had any tabloid journalists ever inhaled, they would not be able to uphold the standards of investigative journalism that we so value, as they would be too busy dealing in lowlife misery and sin. Had any police officers ever inhaled they would not be able to exercise such clear judgement as they have in this case. And had any government spin doctors ever attended what is bizarrely being referred to as a "spliff party", they would have become totally detached from reality, and be living in some hazy world of their own.

Thank goodness none of this has happened, and that we have such a sensible drugs policy, and that everyone is being so responsible. The minister concerned has responsibly made his son confess, the tabloid reporter has responsibly had the hash tested to make sure she got her money's worth, the editor concerned has responsibly told us that the young man is into drugs in "a fairly alarming manner". The father wants to be named, but he would be breaking the law, even though everyone has a shrewd idea who he is anyway. We cannot have him breaking the law just because his son has, and we certainly cannot question the law even though it is obviously not a very sensible one.



Photograph: Mykel Nicolau

The excuse for all this sanctimonious twaddle and hypocrisy is that it is being done in the name of protection. Children must be protected from drugs even though nearly half of them by the age of 15 will have tried cannabis anyway. The Government must protect the minister concerned. The boy's identity must be protected although it has been so hinted at that it will soon become common knowledge. To protect someone is to assume responsibility for them, rather than letting them make up their own mind: thus responsibility – a favourite word of this clean and sober administration – must be assumed at all times, even when it cannot be guaranteed.

Parents are responsible for the misdemeanours of their children, even when these children are nearly adult. They are responsible when they will not go to school, and do bad things, because the state wants to shift responsibility away from itself and back onto parents. Fair enough. But the paradox is that the state itself is responsible for telling us that it is us and not they who are now to be held responsible. Is it possible to impose a sense of responsibility in this way?

Well, if it is, then how can the same state now allow us to be responsible for what we choose to inhale? Yet again, all talk of the decriminalisation of cannabis, a sensible and often dull debate, is being overshadowed by hysteria about drugs in general. The

spectre of drug-related crime has been raised. Show me what crimes are committed by middle-class smokers and middle-class puffers, apart from the odd bit of shoplifting, and I will begin to take this seriously. Otherwise, why cannot politicians brought up in the 1960s make the distinction between different kinds of drugs that 15-year-olds make with ease?

Are those in government really as far removed from reality as they appear? One hoped that a younger government would not continue to perpetuate the feeling that its members do not know much about the country they are governing. Once more there appears to be two nations, the poor misguided out-of-touch warriors fighting a war on drugs that their counterparts in America admit they have already lost, that is full of imagery about evil pushers and horrible addicts, that has Leah Betts as its patron saint of ignorance, that believes prohibition works contrary to all the evidence, that cannot recognise its own children and when it finally does, hauls them down to the police station. This is the nation that is out of control, that has got itself into the fine mess that the minister is in today. These are the people we should be concerned about – the sad deluded souls who cannot deal with reality except by ignoring it.

The other nation just does its own illegal thing. It knows that Noel Gallagher was being truthful when he said that for some people taking drugs was

like having a cup of tea. It knows that drugs can make you have a good time and sometimes can make you have a terrible time. It understands that much of the music that it likes could not be made without inhaling. It also made "The Drugs Don't Work" a number one hit. It has an independent mind because it knows that neither the media nor the Government tells the truth about drugs. It knows that ecstasy does not always kill, that cannabis does not lead to heroin, and it knows these things because this is its experience. It knows people who should not take drugs, whose lives are ruined by them, and it knows that sometimes drugs are the symptoms not the cause of that ruin. It knows that drugs are a phase, and that they can make you very boring indeed. It knows, in other words, that none of this is a big deal, or even the small deal that all this fuss is over.

How can these two nations begin to communicate with each other? How can the father

sit down with the son that has caused him all this trouble and say, not "you are stupid", but "you are ordinary"? How can politicians, never mind their pressurised children, admit that they have also made mistakes? Cannabis does not lead to hard drugs any more than being the child of a politician leads to soft drugs.

Honesty is the only way, but our terribly responsible law will not allow it. Sometimes the only way to change the law is to break it, but that is not an option for a cabinet minister. Those in power who speak of any kind of drug-taking as a way of avoiding reality should consider that they have themselves created a situation in which realities cannot properly be faced. I worry about those people. They are so completely out of it that they cannot see what is in front of their faces; their wasted lives are full of empty promises. One day they will deal with the drugs problem. Meanwhile their own children just deal with it. Falling that, they just deal.

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Welfare reform? We really don't have any choice



KEN JACKSON
LABOUR AND
NECESSITY

Tony Blair is right to stand firm on reforming welfare. Labour was elected to modernise Britain, not to defend the status quo. And just as Labour was trusted in 1945 to build the welfare state, now it is entrusted with its reform. As we have seen in recent weeks, some in Labour's ranks are uncomfortable with change. They always are. But we cannot afford to let them derail the reform that Tony Blair has rightly set in train. Those of us who remain committed to the welfare state know that there is no other option.

The simple truth is that our system of welfare does not work. It does not deliver help to those most in need. It does not help us fight the war on poverty. And it has lost sight of the values upon which it was founded. Responsibility, independence, dignity – values that guided the pioneers of the welfare state but values that have been dropped along the way.

Yes, some argue that values are less important than the

amount of money we spend. They believe more money equals a better welfare state. They are wrong. The Conservatives increased welfare spending. They also increased the number of people living in poverty. Labour will do better.

And we should not forget the implications of the costs of welfare. Those who demand more spending appear to live in a world in which money does indeed grow on trees. The rest of us do not have that luxury. We spend £100bn a year on welfare – six times as much as we do on education. Welfare takes a third of all public spending. And as welfare bills rise, we watch our schools crumble, our public transport grind to a halt and our hospitals struggle to survive. The cost of welfare makes it impossible to prioritise spending across the range of government departments.

Nor are people prepared to pay more for a system that does not work. Each working day, every ordinary working man and woman pays £14 to fund the

aspirations of the advocates of higher welfare spending. But they are often left out of the debate. They should not be taken for granted.

For most working people know that the system is abused, albeit by a minority. And just as people in genuine need have the right to help, working people have the right to expect that the system they fund is in working order. They understand the need for reform. That is why so many returned to Labour, because Labour had stopped defending what clearly did not work.

Yes, reform means facing difficult decisions. But if Labour is serious about modernising welfare – and I believe it is – there can be no excuse for ducking them. And yes, change is unsettling, if people understand that it will bring a brighter future. It requires both courage and compassion. The two are not mutually exclusive.

But Britain is not alone in

adapting welfare to present-day needs. Around the world, industrialised nations are coming to terms with profound economic and social change. Even Sweden, where at one time three-quarters of the population

Change will require courage and compassion. The two are not mutually exclusive

were net recipients of welfare, is embarking on reform. Sweden, like other nations, knows that it cannot let welfare spending spiral further out of control. Why? Because like Britain, nations across the world

understand that high welfare spending can be an obstacle to long-term competitiveness. Some of our European partners know to their cost that high social costs lead in part to high unemployment. If Britain is to survive and prosper, both public spending and taxation must be kept in check. Global capital, international competition, multinational companies – all leave us with no option.

So let us have a debate about welfare. Let us discuss how best we can reform it to help people into work, to help those in genuine need, to encourage competitiveness and investment in Britain. But let's not waste time deciding whether reform is necessary. The people decided on 1 May that they wanted a modernising government. Labour made clear then that it would reform welfare. It is up to all of us to help it achieve its aims.

The writer is General Secretary of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union.

18/OBITUARIES



Grace and beauty and animal intensity: Mifune in *Rashomon* (1950)

Toshiro Mifune

Toshiro Mifune, actor and film and television producer: born Qingdao, Manchuria 1 April 1920; married 1950; Sachiko Yoshikawa (deceased); two sons; marriage dissolved 1970; secondly Miki Kitagawa (one daughter); died Tokyo 24 December 1997.

It was the very great director Akira Kurosawa who discovered Toshirō Mifune, the greatest of all Japanese movie actors, and starred him in a dozen or so absolute masterpieces. In all, Mifune made about 130 films, but it is mainly Kurosawa's that he is remembered by. Because of their international success, their star became known in Japan as Sakai no Mifune or "World-wide Mifune".

He was born in 1920 in Manchuria, where his parents were stationed and where his father had a photographic studio. He was educated at Dairen High School, where he excelled at national sports like karate, archery and swordsmanship, skills that were to serve him well in his screen career. For a while, he took over his father's photography business, and because of his experience of photographic techniques he was assigned to a photography unit when war broke out and he joined the air force. He hated it.

At the end of the war he went to Tokyo and stayed with a friend who was working as a cameraman at the Toho Movie Company and who encouraged him to apply for a job there. He sent in his CV but, as luck would have it, the document was sent by mistake to the casting department, which was just then mounting a search for "new faces" on the cinema screen.

Four thousand people applied, of whom 16 men were chosen, including Mifune. They were trained in acting before the cameras by an old director, Eizo Tanaka, for three months. Mifune's first, unremarkable screen appearance was in 1946, in *Shin baka judai* ("New Age Follies"). But he was noticed by Kurosawa, who had written the scenario for Mifune's second movie, the 1947 *Gintō no hana* ("Over the Silver Peak"), directed by Sankichi Taniguchi and also starring another Kurosawa discovery, Takashi Shimura, who was later to play the woodcutter in *Rashomon*.

Kurosawa chose Mifune to appear in the lead of the 1948 *Yoidore tenshi* ("The Drunken Angel") and so created a new rebel movie star. In his autobiography, *Gamu no abura* ("Oil of Road", 1982), Kurosawa describes the impact the "hooligan" Mifune made on him:

Mifune had the kind of talent I had never encountered before in the Japanese film world. It was, above all, the speed with which he expressed himself that was astounding. The ordinary Japanese actor might need 10 feet of film to get across an impression; Mifune needed only three feet. The speed of his movements was such that he said in a single action what took ordinary actors three separate movements to express. And yet with all his quickness he also had surprisingly fine sensibilities.

In 1949, Kurosawa starred him again in a controversial subject, *Shizuka naru koto* ("Quiet Duel"), about a doctor who has contracted syphilis while operating on an infected patient, and so refuses to marry. It is a truly absorbing film, and at the present time its relevance to the AIDS epidemic lends it a disturbing topicality. In the same year, Kurosawa produced *Nora*

Inu ("Stray Dog"), a detective thriller that won the Geijutsu-sai Grand Prix, followed in 1950 by *Skydancer* ("Scandal") about the pernicious effects of scandal magazines and what were to become known as the Japrazzi.

Nineteen fifty was the year of what is perhaps Kurosawa's greatest masterpiece, *Rashomon*, and one of Mifune's greatest performances. It was in several ways a revolutionary film, with a script presenting the story from four different points of view. The camerawork by Kazuo Miyagawa is breathtaking in its speed in following Mifune's athletic exploits, often shooting directly into the sun with dazzling flashes among bamboo thickets.

Kurosawa's direction of Mifune encouraged him to act "like a panther": he showed his star documentaries of panthers and leopards in action, and the spectator can only marvel at the grace and beauty and animal intensity of everything Mifune does, whether fighting or languorously reclining in total sensual abandon as the hit of his sword slides up his thigh. The film was awarded the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival in 1951, and won an Oscar for the Best Foreign Film in the same year.

The next Kurosawa/Mifune work was *Hakuchi* (1951), based on Dostoevsky's *The Idiot*, and is remarkable because it is set, not in St Petersburg, but in the snows of Hokkaido. Japan's northernmost island. Mifune plays Rogojin with expressive insight into the complex character, while Setsuko Hara is a luminous Nastasia Philipovna - another great "new face" in the making.

It was one of those films that

broke Kurosawa's heart when the production company Shochiku unfeelingly cut it down to a commercial length. It was only the news of *Rashomon*'s European success that kept him going on his next project with Mifune, the first of the great samurai westerns, *Seven Samurai*, which did not see the light until 1954. Meanwhile, Mifune triumphed in 1952 in Kenji Mizoguchi's masterpiece *Saikaku ichidai onna* ("The Life of the Courtesan Ohara"), playing the tragic lowly samurai Katsunosuke, a victim of love. It won the Venice International Prize for Mizoguchi, while *Seven Samurai* won the San Marco Silver Lion. In 1969, John Sturges re-made it as *The Magnificent Seven*.

It was the golden age of the Japanese cinema, with Mifune appearing in a series of Kurosawa samurai classics and more literary, thought-provoking themes as in the 1955 *Ikimono no kiroku* ("Record of a Living Being"), a deeply moving meditation on the threat of atomic warfare, in which Mifune convincingly played an old man beset by fears of nuclear annihilation who is unable to convince his family of the threat they live under. Mifune plays a medieval Japanese lord in the 1957 version of *Macbeth* called *Kumonosujo*, whose English title, *Throne of Blood*, is a poor substitute for a direct translation of the Japanese, "Castle of Spiders".

In the same year, we had Mifune as the thief in Gorky's *Dorozo* ("Lower Depths"), again set in feudal Japan, using a single set with brilliant inventiveness. Nineteen sixty-one brought Mifune fans *Yojimbo* for which he won the Best Actor Award at the Venice Film

Festival. It was made into a spaghetti western by Serge Leone in 1964 under the title *A Fistful of Dollars*. In 1962, Mifune started his own production company, after disagreements with Kurosawa, with whom he made his final film, *Akagi* (*Red Beard*) in 1965, and was awarded the Grand Prix. But it was too long and static, and was not a success.

Mifune's only film made for his own production company was not a success, so he built an open set on waste land in Setagaya Seijo and concentrated on television films, in many of which he acted. The samurai movies made with Kurosawa during the 1960s were now most often associated with him, but he was also in great demand from foreign directors, playing dignified but stereotypical Japanese in John Frankenheimer's *Grand Prix* (1966), John Boorman's *Hell in the Pacific* (1968) and Steven Spielberg's *1941* (1980) among other less worthy movies, like Terence Young's *Red Sun* (with Alain Delon and Charles Bronson) in 1971.

He finally had the open set at Setagaya torn down and built a luxurious block of apartments in its place. He was ailing, and his first wife, whose divorce had been a particularly painful affair, returned to look after him until she died of cancer a few years ago. He still worked occasionally, though he was developing Alzheimer's disease.

Toshiro Mifune is still "World-wide Mifune", for he is the one Japanese that everyone readily recognises and remembers. He died on the eve of the 20th anniversary of the death of another great legend, Charlie Chaplin.

— James Kirkup

Johnny Coles

Johnny Coles, trumpeter: born Trenton, New Jersey 3 July 1926; died Philadelphia 21 December 1997.

"Johnny moves by the moment," said pianist Herbie Hancock. "He plays things with such sheer beauty that I wonder where it's coming from."

Johnny Coles would perhaps have been regarded as one of the jazz greats had he not been so close to Miles Davis in his sound and style. Both Coles and Davis had the ability to express themselves powerfully using a minimal number of notes. The similarities clouded the fact that Coles's inventions were completely original and that he barely borrowed from Davis at all. He was basically a self-taught musician who developed his playing by working in a military band.

The diminutive trumpeter joined a sextet called Slappy and his Swingsters when he was 19, and in 1948 became a member of the band led by the blues-singing alto player Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson. Although Vinson played the rhythm-and-blues so popular at the time, he was in fact a sophisticated mod-

ern jazz musician, and his band also included future giants of music in the pianist Red Garland and the tenor saxophonist John Coltrane.

Coles continued to work amidst a mixture of contemporary jazz and rhythm-and-blues during the first half of the Fifties when he played for the drummer Philly Jo Jones, the singer-saxophonist Bull Moose Jackson and, from 1956 to 1958, the tenor saxophonist James Moody.

He first came to the notice of jazz fans with his remarkable solos with the Gil Evans orchestras between 1958 and 1964. In retrospect this proved to be the ultimate setting for his work. When I interviewed him in 1973 he told me:

Gil Evans's composition was easy to read, but it was the interpretation of it which made the music. I remember once asking Gil how he wanted me to play something and he said, "Don't worry about it. You're going to play it right anyway." He left me a bit mystified, you know.

The 1960 "Sunken Treasure", one of the most haunting performances in all jazz, best illustrates the inspired perfection of the partnership. Evans's composition provided an eerie seabed for Coles's fastidious and plaintive improvisation. "We

did it all in one take," he told me with pride. The album in which it is found, one of the most magical jazz collections, was called *Out of the Cool* on the Impulse! label, and its six tracks brought out Coles's most effective work on disc. Potent, too was his reappraisal in 1959 of Bix Beiderbecke's "Davenport Blues", where again his relaxed choice of notes was inspired by Evans's imaginative setting.

When work with Evans became more sporadic in 1964 Coles joined the Charlie Mingus Workshop and appeared on some of the bassist's recordings, creating music of great fire with the remarkable saxophonist Eric Dolphy.

In 1968 he became a member of the sextet newly formed by Herbie Hancock. Hancock had earlier given up leadership of his own band to become, for five years, the pianist in one of Miles Davis's most influential quintets.

"Herbie Hancock's was the only group I played in that I got to work ahead of time. I'd warm up for at least a half-hour, ready to play. I had a ball with that band. I really couldn't tell you in words how gratifying it was," Coles left Hancock to

join Ray Charles's band in 1969. "A man must eat," he reflected.

Hancock lionised the veteran. But Duke Ellington took a more detached view of the trumpeter when Coles joined his orchestra in 1971. "I asked Duke's son Mercer, 'Coles remembered,' and he said that Duke was considering writing something to feature me."

At the time of our conversation in 1973 Coles had been with Duke Ellington's Orchestra for several years. It seemed odd to me then that Ellington was so remote from the musicians who worked for him that they had to deal with him formally through Mercer.

A few weeks ago the widow of the Ellington trumpeter Ray Nance seemed to confirm this distancing when she told me that her husband respected his leaders so much that "Ray would never have questioned a decision of Duke's, musical or otherwise." (In contrast, I was once on a coach with the Count Basie Band when his trumpeter Thad Jones reached over the back of his seat and, to great merriment all round, swiped the Count over the head with a rolled-up newspaper. Nobody could ever have done

that to Duke.) Nance had been in the band for a quarter of a century.

"I'll stay with Duke for a while, because it'll give me a measure of prestige that I haven't yet had," said Coles, who was with Ellington from 1970 to 1974.

He gave the impression that, unusually amongst musicians, who normally deified Ellington, he considered working for him to be a routine job. "As far as Gil was concerned, Ellington was the biggest influence on his writing. I enjoy playing in both bands, but I had more freedom playing in Gil's band," he said.

Coles found Ellington's music too confining. "I like to play," he said. This was a useful reference to the fact that his solo work with Duke was confined at each concert to a fluent two-minute improvisation on "How High the Moon" played on trumpet over a backing of sprightly Be-bop piano from Ellington. There was little or no orchestration involved.

"Some of Duke's writing is sparse. Sometimes he might just write 12 bars and leave it to the guys in the band to fill it up. He has musicians in the band who have been with him for



Coles: fastidious and plaintive improvisation

Photograph: Val Wilmer

many years and they just about know what he wants without him having to tell them." Coles was lonely because Ellington's band was made up of cliques and he wasn't accepted into any of them.

When Ellington died in 1974 Coles rejoined Ray Charles and in 1976 worked with drummer Art Blakey's quintet.

Settled in San Francisco, in 1985 he worked in the Count Basie "graveyard" band (Basie had died in 1984), having also been a member of "graveyard" bands devoted to the music of the composers Charlie Mingus and Tadd Dameron. His health declined during the Nineties and he moved to Philadelphia.

Coles had shown enormous talent as a trumpet player. He mentioned Charlie Shavers, Roy Eldridge, Dizzy Gillespie and Miles Davis as the line of players who had influenced him. He also acknowledged the fiery work of Freddie Hubbard. "But I'm more of a melancholy player," he said.

— Steve Voe

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

DEATHS

POSS: Brian Malzard, Emeritus Professor of Psychology, University of London, died peacefully in hospital on 23 December, aged 81. Memorial service on Thursday 9 January at 3pm. Family flowers only. A memorial gathering is being arranged, details to be announced.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, In Memoriam) should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1, Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, telephone 0171 293 2002 (24-hour answering machine 0171-293 2001) or faxed to 0171-293 2010, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements (notices, functions, forthcoming marriages, Birthdays) must be submitted in writing (or typed) and are charged at £10 a line (VAT extra). They should be accompanied by a daytime telephone number.

The OBITUARIES e-mail address is obituaries@independent.co.uk. The Independent's main switchboard number is 0171-293 2000.

Changing of the Guard
The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment in suits the Queen's Guard at Horse Guards, 11am. 1st Battalion Welsh Guards mounts the Queen's Guard at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, hand provided by the Grenadier Guards.

Birthdays

Mr David Bailey, photographer and film director, 60; Sir Richard Baylis, former Physician to the Queen, 81; Mr Leopold Brook, former chairman, Simon Engineering, 86; Mr Christopher Campbell, chairman, British Shipbuilders, 62; Admiral William J. Crowe, former US ambassador, 75; The Duke of Devonshire, former Chancellor of Manchester University, 78; Professor Sir Kingsley Dunham, former director, Institute of Geological Sciences, 88; Mr David Greenway, cricketer, 44; Mr Walter Harrison, former MP, 77; Mr Algeron Heber-Percy, Lord-Lieutenant for Shropshire, 54; Sir Bruce Pannill, governor, the Bank of Scotland, 60; Sir Charles Reece, former research and technology director, ICI, 71; Mr Edmund de Rothschild, director, N.M. Rothschild and Sons, 85; Professor John Thomas, chemist, 72; Sir Keith Thomas, president, Corpus Christi College, Oxford, 68; Sir Michael Tippett, OM, CBE, composer, 93; Dame Rachel Waterhouse, former chairman, Consumers' Association, 75; Mr Robert Wilton, chairman, Wilton Enterprises Ltd, 53; The Right Rev Kenneth Woolcombe, Assistant Bishop, Worcester, 74.

Anniversaries

Births: James Wolfe, general, 1727; Count Folke Bernadotte at Wisborg, soldier, humanitarian and diplomat, 1848; George Gilbert Airne Murray, classical scholar, 1864; Isaac Azimov, Russian-born biochemist and science-fiction writer, 1920. Deaths: Ovid (Publius Ovidius Naso), Roman poet, 17; Barthold

Georg Niebuhr, historian, 1831; Fabian Gottlieb Bellinghousen, polar explorer, 1852; Sir George Bidell Airy, astronomer royal, 1892; Sir Edward Augustus Bond, librarian of the British Museum, 1898; Sabine Baring-Gould, clergyman and author, 1924; Eleanor Rathbone, social reformer, 1946; Dick Emery, comedian, 1983. On this day: the Spanish army recaptured Granada from the Moors, 1492; the Académie Française was established by Cardinal Richelieu, 1635; Louis Daguerre took the first photograph of the Moon, 1839; Wagner's opera *The Flying Dutchman* was first produced, Dresden, 1843; Sir Robert Napier led a British expedition to Abyssinia (Ethiopia) to release the imprisoned British Consul, 1868; the first municipal crematorium was opened at Hull, 1901; King Zog of Albania, absent from his country, was deposed, 1946; cupronickel coins were issued in the United Kingdom to replace silver, 1947; the first rocket to pass near the Moon - the unmanned Russian Luna 1 - was launched, 1959; 66 people died after a barrier collapsed at Ibrox Park football ground, Glasgow, 1971. Today is the Feast Day of St Adalhard or Adalard, St Basil, St Caspar dei Bufalo, St Gregory Nazianzen, St Macarius of Alexandria, St Murchin, St Seraphim of Sarov, St Vincentian and The Holy Name of Jesus.

Lectures

National Gallery: Colin Wiggins, "Courtyard Louas (1): Panagiotis, The Madonna and Child with Saints John the Baptist and Jerome", 17m. Victoria and Albert Museums: Julian Litten, "English Stained and Painted Glass 1350-1500", 2.30pm.

FAITH & REASON

Why the other lights of the world are not fakes

The Christ-child brings light to the darkness. But the same metaphor is crucial to Judaism and Islam. Adherents of the three faiths cannot afford to ignore each other, argues the Rev Keith Ward, Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford. Rather each light must reflect the brightness of those that surround it.

"Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising."

A common theme in the religious mythologies of the world is the cosmic battle between light and darkness, between beauty and chaos. The first creation story in the book of Genesis - which is held to be holy by Judaism, Christianity and Islam alike - speaks of the formless sea of chaos, over which swept the breath of God, bringing ordered complexity, beauty and life into being in successive waves of creative power.

But the first divine act was the man-

ifestation of light. This is the light of divine glory, or beauty, which exists before sun, stars or moon, and which will remain in that new creation at the end of history in which there is no more sea. Human life now - between the beginning in chaos and the end in glory - is an interweaving of light and darkness, in which the material is being transfigured to become a vehicle for spirit.

The three great Abrahamic faiths tell different but related stories of the unfolding of this sacred cosmology.

Isaiah, from whom the opening quotation is taken, sees the people of Israel as called by God to be the vehicle of divine light in a world of oppression and cruelty. They are to be the priests of the earth, their land is to be a sanctuary of justice and peace, and they are to be the exemplars of the marriage of creator and creature.

Islam opens up the law of divine wisdom, the *shari'ah*, to all people. One of the best loved verses of the Koran (xviii, 35) says, "God is the Light... God who guide whom He will to His light." By joyful submission to the law of God, darkness is dispelled by the presence of the Lord of light.

The Christian way finds the creative Word of God embodied in the person of Jesus, who becomes himself the liberator from darkness and the light of the world. His human personality becomes, for his disciples, the transparent vehicle of the divine light. United inseparably with the glory of God, his risen life is the source of the light which his body, the church, is called to manifest to the world. The church is called to follow its Lord in serving the world in healing, forgiveness and reconciliation.

These three ways - the way of the people of the covenant, the community of the divine law, and the way of the "body of Christ" - are all ways of mediating light in darkness, of building beauty from chaos, of incarnating justice and loving-kindness in the world. If they strive with one another, they should do so in goodness. If they disagree, as they inevitably will, they should do so in love and respect.

A resolution for the faithful for this new year might be never to say, "My light is the only light, all others are fakes", but to say instead, "God is the only light, and He makes His light shine

where He wills". We in the Abrahamic traditions respond to the light that we have seen, by the grace of the one true God. We ourselves obscure that light, by our greed, hatred and ignorance. We must learn to discern the light wherever it shines, to encourage and cherish it.

It is even possible that the light we have will shine with its true brightness only when it reflects the lights that surround us. These lights of faith can lead us from the often wilful ignorance which breeds misunderstanding and intolerance towards knowledge of the one reality of supreme goodness, whose true and uncreated light they dimly reflect.

In the words of the Second Vatican Council's constitution of the church in the modern world, *Gaudium et Spes*, "Since all men are in fact called to one and the same destiny, which is divine, we must hold that the Holy Spirit offers to all the possibility of being made partners, in a way known to God, in the paschal mystery." And, one must add, in the Mosaic covenant and the community of true Muslims, those who submit their lives to God. Are our eyes, in this new year, prepared for such a light?

20/RACING



Leading by example: Warren Marston goes over the final fence in the long-distance chase at Cheltenham yesterday without his mount, Danger Baby, who refused. The race was won by Kendal Cavalier

Photograph: David Ashdown

Demise of Coral signifies fewer choices for the punter

The New Year has begun badly for punters with the announcement that Ladbroke has bought one of its main rivals Coral. As John Cobb reports, the main effect is a reduction in choice for the consumer.

Ladbroke's swift and stunning acquisition of Coral for £375.5m yesterday surprised many within the racing industry, but it was the firm's claim that this was good news for punters that really astonished.

The deal with Bass, owners of Coral, wipes out at a stroke the third biggest bookmaking chain in Britain and tightens

Ladbroke's grip on the industry. The 833 Coral shops brings Ladbroke's estate to 2,600 shops out of a UK total of 8,500. William Hill, its only serious rival now, has 1,530 shops with the Tote up to 340 after acquiring 128 shops from Ladbrokes for £41m as part of the deal.

The sell-off to the Tote is particularly important for Ladbroke as a means of persuading the Office of Fair Trading that customer choice will be preserved and that a referral to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission would be unnecessary.

Ladbroke's managing director, Chris Bell, audaciously claimed that the buy-out will benefit punters and that job losses would be kept to a minimum.

"Punters can now look forward to improved standards of service and facilities in all shops," he said. "I would be the first to admit that there is a downside in that there will be less choice for early prices. But there are still plenty of options when all the independent bookmakers are taken into account."

The British Betting Offices Association, which represents the independent bookmakers, holds a rather different view: "Fewer brand shops make less competition," its spokesman, Will Rose, said. "It's bad news for our customers - they are going to have fewer offers from their bookmakers and less choice as to where to bet."

The deal also includes 50 betting shops in Ireland and eight in Jersey and the Channel Islands. "Obviously, this all needs official approval," Bell added. "We are hopeful that there won't be a problem."

The problem is more likely to be one for punters. Already in recent weeks they have been hit by the announcement that they will no longer benefit from two trade papers, the *Racing Post* having been taken over by the owners of *The Sporting Life*. And when they have cause for complaint there is no organization to back them, the National Association for the Protection of Punters having ceased operations on New Year's Eve.

NEWBURY

HYPERION
1.20 Mountain Path 2.50 IVORY COASTER (nap)
1.50 Be Brave 3.20 Brecon
2.20 Random Assault (nb) 3.50 Polar Prospect

DOING: Soft (Heavy in places on hurdles)
● Left-hand course with stiff fences.
● Course is SE of town near A34. Railway station (service from London, Paddington) adjacent. Clubhouse: Members £24; Terraces £3; Silver Ring £4 (OAPs half price). Accompanied 17-year-olds or under free of entrance. CAR PARK: Free. Punters area £4 per car plus 10p per person or £5 per car plus £5 per person.
● LEADING TRAINERS: J. Henderson - 21 winners from 88 runners (give a success ratio of 23.6%); O. Sheppard - 18 from 59 (30.5%); N. Henderson - 14 from 58 (24.1%); M. Pipe - 12 from 71 (16.9%).
● LEADING JOCKEYS: J. Dunwoody 10 wins from 95 rides (give a success ratio of 10.5%); A. Fitzgerald 12 from 111 (10.8%); C. Llewellyn 10 from 88 (11.3%); A. P. McCoy 8 from 65 (12.3%).
● FAVOURITES: 347 wins in 361 races (40.7%).
● BLINKERS FIRST TIME: None.

1.20 ELCO PARK NOVICE CHASE (CLASS D) £5,000 added 3m Penalty Value £3,489
1 3-15 MEADOWSIDE (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
2 3-15-1 RAKAZINA (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
3 3-15-1 RAKAZINA (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
4 3-15-1 RAKAZINA (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
5 3-15-1 RAKAZINA (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
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9 3-15-1 RAKAZINA (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
10 3-15-1 RAKAZINA (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson

1.50 RAMSBURY HURDLE (CLASS B) £7,500 added 5YO 2m 5F Penalty Value £5,069
1 2-20-10 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
2 2-20-10 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
3 2-20-10 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
4 2-20-10 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
5 2-20-10 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
6 2-20-10 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
7 2-20-10 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
8 2-20-10 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
9 2-20-10 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
10 2-20-10 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson

2.20 NEW YEAR HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS C) £7,000 added 2m 11F Penalty Value £4,822
1 3-15-1 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
2 3-15-1 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
3 3-15-1 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
4 3-15-1 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
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10 3-15-1 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson

2.50 WENTWORTH HURDLE (CLASS D) £4,000 added 2m 11YO Penalty Value £3,140
1 3-15-1 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
2 3-15-1 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
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3.50 WENTWORTH HURDLE (CLASS D) £4,000 added 2m 11YO Penalty Value £3,140
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10 3-15-1 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson

1.20 GLENGOY NOVICE CHASE (QUALIFIER) (CLASS E) £4,000 2m 5F 11YO Penalty Value £3,140
1 3-15-1 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
2 3-15-1 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
3 3-15-1 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
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9 3-15-1 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
10 3-15-1 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson

1.40 HAPPY 40TH BIRTHDAY LESLEY 'NH' NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 2m
1 3-15-1 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
2 3-15-1 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
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10 3-15-1 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson

1.20 DROUGHTY NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 2m
1 3-15-1 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
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FORM GUIDE
RANDOM ASSAULT, who won over fences in his native New Zealand, gained his first success since joining David Nicholson's team when beating Barnegora Bay by five lengths at Utzamer a fortnight ago. Barnegora Bay had beaten Flying Instructor, the favourite at Utzamer a fortnight ago, so the form is useful. Random Assault can follow up off a high mark with good 7lb claimer Oliver McNeil again aboard. Barnegora Bay had the unusual record in 1996-97 of three wins in a row followed by a hat-trick and he also scored twice earlier last term, though he was pulled up on his final outing. He stayed on strongly to defeat Polaris Fox five lengths at Ayr on the return and ran Green Desert to a neck at Doncaster, so can be expected to make a close race of it.

2.50 ABINGDON CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,500 3m 11YO Penalty Value £2,775
1 20-42-1 DUNHAM (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
2 20-42-1 DUNHAM (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
3 20-42-1 DUNHAM (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
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3.20 WEYHILL HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS C) £5,500 added 2m 5F Penalty Value £3,760
1 1-4-30-1 DUNHAM (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
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10 1-4-30-1 DUNHAM (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson

3.50 WENTWORTH HURDLE (CLASS D) £4,000 added 2m 11YO Penalty Value £3,140
1 3-15-1 RABBIT (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
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1.00 LINCOLNSHIRE AMATEURS RS HANDICAP (CLASS F) (DIV I) £3,500 1m
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2.10 WESTERN WIRE HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS C) £7,000 added 2m 4f
1 4-32-1 BEACH HEAD (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
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2.40 AYR NEW YEAR HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS C) £5,500 added 3m 11YO
1 4-12-1 UNLAKEN (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
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3.10 RACING CHANNEL NOVICE HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS E) £4,500 added 3m 1f
1 00-30-1 THE RY PADRE (5) (J. Dunwoody) 11.10. J. Henderson
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SOUTHWELL (AW)

HYPERION
12.00 Time Of Night 12.30 Joseph's Wine 1.00
Muara Bay 1.30 Pine Ridge Lad 2.00 1m Tef
2.30 Just Another Time 3.00 Rex Mundl 3.30
Sidy The Kidney

12.00 LINCOLNSHIRE AMATEURS HANDICAP (CLASS F) (DIV I) £3,500 1m
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NEWSTEL
INTERNATIONAL

AROUND THE RESORTS

Resort	Comment	Area open	Last snow	Low cm	Upp m	Forecast
ANDORRA						
Pa	Best skiing in upper reaches	100%	30 12	50	70	Unsettled
AUSTRIA						
Angertal	Dry, powdery	85%	28 12	5	30	Sunny then cloud
BULGARIA						
Alpina	Firm packed snow	95%	29 12	50	80	Cloudy
CANADA						
White House	Packed powder snow	100%	30 12	80	140	pt cloudy/ snow
FRANCE						
Planchet	Improvement at all levels	90%	28 12	40	70	Some cloud
ITALY						
Orsina	Great cover from top to bottom	95%	26 12	40	60	Variable
NORWAY						
Heimdal	Firm-packed snow	60%	29 12	45	60	Light cloud
ROMANIA						
Pana Bistra	Firm packed snow	80%	30 12	30	70	Snow
SPAIN						
Formentor	Firm of shadier patch	85%	30 12	35	90	Overcast
SWEDEN						
Salen	Heavily firm-packed snow	90%	25 12	70	75	Overcast
SWITZERLAND						
Villages	90% still operating 100%	28 12	40	40	Bright then snow	
UNITED STATES						
Brookridge	A light cover of fresh powder	55%	30 12	75	90	Bright

Snow Reports supplied by Newstel

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Beresford determined to end Newcastle's barren years

When John Beresford joined Newcastle United he expected his trophy cabinet would soon be bursting with silverware. Five years down the line the shelves are bare and, as he tells Simon Turnbull, it is time the Magpies started to deliver - starting against Everton on Sunday.

Newcastle United have been in this particular way before in their latter days of great expectation and great disappointment. Three seasons ago their quest for silverware turned into the kind of Mersey mission Kenny Dalglish and his stuttering side will undertake in the coming week.

The only prize left for Kevin Keegan and his great pretensions was the FA Cup - until, that is, they encountered Everton in a sixth-round tie at Goodison Park. Dave Watson claimed the only goal of the tie - after Duncan Ferguson left the Newcastle defence in a suitably disorderly state.

"Yeah," John Beresford recalled, "it was a header from Mr Ferguson that did the damage." Beresford played at left-back for Newcastle that day. He is likely to be in their midfield when they return to Goodison on FA Cup duty on Sunday.

"The thing is," he continued, "on the subject of Everton's towering totem, 'you've really got to try to cut off the supply at source. It's up to the full-backs and the wide midfielders to stop quality balls coming in, because that's when he's at his most dangerous. Someone who is 6ft 5in and can jump is capable of causing you a hell of a lot of problems."

Such concern is understandable. Defeat on Sunday and against Liverpool in the quarter-finals of the Coca-Cola Cup at St James' Park next Wednesday would effectively condemn Newcastle to yet another trophy-less season.

After five defeats and two draws in their last seven Premiership matches, the runners-up of the past two seasons start the new year 20 points behind Manchester United. More worryingly, with Everton and Tottenham Hotspur just six points behind, relegation has suddenly become the talk of the Toon Army.

"In all my time at Newcastle I've never experienced anything like it before," Beresford said, "but maybe the kick up the backside will be good for us. It makes you think. 'Hang on a bit. It's not all glory, glory.'"

"There's always a big club that gets dragged down there and I think it's better to get this little warning now rather than when it might be too late. We know what we've got to do and it's up to us to put it right. 'We're stuck in a little bit of a rut in which nothing seems to be going for us. It must be hard for the gaffer, because he's finding it very difficult to put out the team that he wants to and to use the formation he wants to. It would be nice to get a bit of consistency."



you're thinking. "We haven't won again". It's a new experience for me at Newcastle and it's something we've got to get out of very quickly.

"I don't care if we have a nightmare on Sunday, or I have a nightmare and we scrape a jummy 1-0 win. That's what it sometimes needs to turn things round."

The 31-year-old Beresford has been at Newcastle ever since Keegan started to turn things round for the Tyneside club. He was the first long-term investment Keegan made after the short-term buys that helped avert the threat of relegation to the old Third Division.

He arrived from Portsmouth for £50,000 in June 1992 expecting to become part of the first Newcastle team to win a major domestic honour since Jimmy Scouler lifted the FA Cup in 1955. Five and a half years later he is still waiting.

"Of course the expectation is great," Beresford said. "But I remember the massive pressure Alex Ferguson was under to win something when he first went to United. There was a lot of talk about him getting the sack at one point, but they gave him more time and eventually he got the balance he wanted in the team."

John Beresford: Trophy chaser Photograph: Empics



Steve Fulton fires his second goal past the despairing dive of Chris Reid, the Hibernian goalkeeper, at Tynecastle yesterday Photograph: Reuters

Hibernian's fortunes run wild at Hearts

David McKinney
Heart of Midlothian 2
Hibernian 2

Hearts' dreams of starting the new year in pole position were ripped from them in a thunderous Edinburgh derby which provided tremendous entertainment for the capacity crowd at Tynecastle.

Fortunes fluctuated wildly as Hearts surrendered a 2-0 lead, looked as if they might lose the game, then came close to the victory they so desperately wanted. In the end, they remain one point behind Rangers. The Hearts of the first half were clearly the side that has maintained the challenge at the top of the league. The moves were flowing, the forwards dangerous and bottom-placed Hibs looked out of their depth.

The return of Shaun Dennis to the Hibs defence after an absence of a year appeared in the early stages to be too much of a gamble as the towering centre-back struggled to keep up with the pace of the game.

Jim Duffy, the Hibs manager, might have felt some kind of change was necessary to reverse a sequence of results which has seen the club go 14 games without a win.

Chris Reid in the Hibs goal saved well in the fourth minute from Stéphane Adam and 60 seconds later he was collecting the ball from the net. A fast-moving attack began with Steve Fulton playing the ball to John Robertson, who passed to Neil McCann and a first-time cross found Fulton, whose glancing header arched over Reid into the net.

The second goal five minutes later gave a clear indication of the problems Duffy has faced over the last few months. Fulton and Robertson again combined, but the ball broke to the Hibs central defensive pair of Dennis and Jean-Marc Boco. Both appeared to expect the other to clear, allowing Fulton to extend Hearts' lead with a well-placed low shot into the corner.

It seemed at that stage as if Hearts could score with every attack. Fulton, Colin Cameron and Stefano Salvatore had a stranglehold on the midfield, while Robertson was perpetual motion up front.

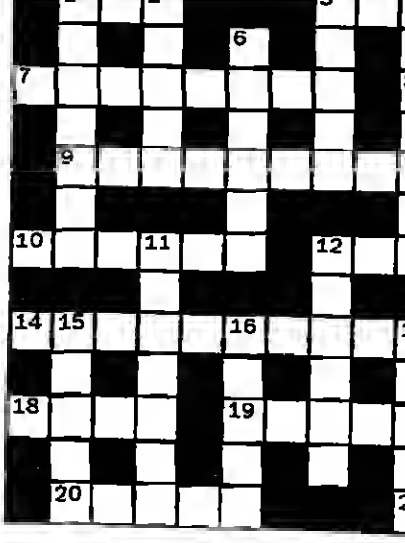
Cameron lifted a shot over the crossbar shortly after the second goal and a Robertson free-kick was deflected into the arms of the grounded goalkeeper. With five minutes of the first half remaining, Salvatore launched an effort which finished high in the stand.

Hibs appeared down and out, but showed great strength of character in making a comeback. In the 51st minute, Kevin Harper skipped down the right before crossing for Andy Walker, who stooped low to head home after Gilles Rousset, the Hearts goalkeeper, left his line but failed to connect with the ball.

GAMES

CONCISE CROSSWORD

No.3497 Friday 2 January



- ACROSS**
- 1 Preserve (3)
 - 3 Creator (5)
 - 7 Flying (8)
 - 8 Brass instrument (4)
 - 9 Mislead items (4,8)
 - 10 Really (6)
 - 12 Hurry along (6)
 - 14 Seasonal song (4,4,4)
 - 18 Rustic accent (4)
 - 19 Court of justice (8)
 - 20 Stratum (5)
 - 21 Brick carrier (3)
- DOWN**
- 1 Field event (7)
 - 2 Resources (5)
 - 3 Tropical fruit (5)
 - 4 Young felines (7)
 - 5 Automaton (5)
 - 6 Walked painfully (6)
 - 11 Getting on in years (7)
 - 12 Scottish dish (6)
 - 13 Precious stone (7)
 - 15 Normal (5)
 - 16 Change (5)
 - 17 Lad (5)
- Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:**
- ACROSS:** 1 Donne, 4 John (Dungeon), 8 Pageant, 9 Chide, 10 Rota, 11 Taxpayer, 12 Deliberations, 15 Complain, 17 Avid, 20 Design, 21 Arizona, 22 Syle, 23 Yarns.
- DOWN:** 1 Digital, 2 Neat, 3 Extraordinary, 4 Jackpot, 5 Hairy, 6 Spur, 7 Debris, 12 Decide, 13 Balance, 14 Obvious, 16 Moist, 18 Dear, 19 Liar.

FA to ask for more World Cup tickets

The Football Association is to apply for more tickets for the World Cup finals following fears of a black market in France. Under current rules, 60 per cent of tickets are intended for the French market, 20 per cent for the game's world governing body, Fifa, and 20 per cent between the two competing teams.

Sir Brian Hayes, Deputy Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, who is heading the FA's security operation, believes that number is too low and could lead to problems. He said yesterday that he would address the issue when he meets French police and tournament organisers later this month.

"I shall be raising such matters as their general policy on ticket control, segregation, how they will handle fans going to and from grounds and inside them and how they are going to cope with the enormous movement of fans across the country travelling in different directions," he said.

Manchester United fans want to meet club officials to clear up the row over standing areas at Old Trafford. The problem has worsened in recent weeks amid claims of bullying and intimidation by security staff. The situation came to a head on Boxing Day against Everton, when fans and security men fought as supporters were ejected from the ground.

At an emergency meeting of the Manchester United Independent Supporters' Association this week the club was urged to meet fans' leaders.

"The next home game is against Spurs on 10 January," Andy Walsh, the Association's spokesman, said. "We have to discuss this before then. The brutality of some of the security staff has gone beyond a joke."

Phil Casey

NON-LEAGUE NOTEBOOK

Halifax go seven points clear at top

Halifax Town beat struggling Gateshead 2-0 yesterday and extended their lead at the top of the GM Vauxhall Conference to seven points.

The Shaymen took their time to see off the league's bottom club, but two second-half goals from Geoff Horsfield sent the majority of an impressive crowd of 3,194 home happy.

The day's biggest crowd, and the largest of the season in the Conference, was at Aggborough, where 4,693 fans watched Hereford United cruise to a 4-1 win over their local rivals, Kidderminster Harriers. The game drew 22 more people than the reverse fixture: a 1-0 home win for Hereford over Kidderminster on Boxing Day.

The man with most to celebrate at Aggborough was Richard Leadbeater, a 20-year-old striker on loan from Wolves, who scored a hat-trick for Hereford within 37 minutes. The experienced Tony Agana added the fourth goal in the 89th minute, closely followed by a consolation for Harriers from Wayne Thomas.

Mickael Madar, Everton's new recruit, is not the only Frenchman hoping to make a big impression in English football in the second half of the season. Sutton United have high hopes of Naseem Akrouf, whom they signed from the French semi-professional club Olympique Noisy-le-Sec last year. After 18 goals in nine games for Sutton's reserve team, the Algerian-born striker scored twice on his first-team debut in the top-of-the-table Rymans League encounter with Dagenham & Redbridge just before Christmas.

Tomorrow Sutton, the Premier Division leaders, are away to Bishop's Cleeve, who will be staging their home fixtures at St Albans City for the rest of the season, having sold their Rhodes Avenue ground for housing development. Stortford's new stadium on Dummow Road should be ready at the start of next season.

Rupert Metcalf

BRIDGE: ALAN HIRON

Game all; dealer South

North
♠ Q J 9 7
♥ K
♦ A K
♣ A Q J 9 7 3

West
♠ K 4 2
♥ J 10 9 7
♦ J 10 9 7
♣ 6 2

East
♠ A 5 4 3 2
♥ A 8 5 3 2
♦ 8 5 3 2
♣ 5 4

South
♠ A 10 8 6 5
♥ Q 6
♦ Q 6 4

I was lucky: so muddled was our auction that West led the ♠ J. I cashed ♣ A K, risked coming to hand with a club, and discarded ♠ K on ♠ Q. Now I could try for an overtrick. Living dangerously, I risked a club ruff and ruffed a heart on the table to try the trump finesse. No joy, but no ruff, and plus 1,430 was an excellent score.

A colleague later admitted to minus 100 on the hand. Obviously, I thought, his auction had attracted a heart lead, but his shifty look suggested that I should probe more deeply. It was a sad tale. For some unfathomable reason, West had led the ♠ 2 against 6♣. This was so clearly a singleton (!), that declarer decided his best bet was a simple trump finesse. When this failed, West lost no time in switching to a heart.

CHESS NEWS: Full coverage of the Adams-Anand world chess semi-final will appear in tomorrow's paper.

CHOICE: PLAY

Klaxons, Trumpets and Raspberries, Gate Theatre, London W11 (0171-229 0706)

Most people's image of a winner of the Nobel prize for literature is male, worthy and wizened. Dario Fo is only the first of these. He has been described as one of the funniest performers alive for his solo piece, *Mistero Buffo*. Fo is the man who put explosive comedy into political theatre with smash hits such as *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*, which conquered the West End of all places. The same happened with *Can't Pay, Won't Pay*. *Klaxons, Trumpets and Raspberries* is a new production from the (broadly named) Juggling Fiends, who made a splash with Graham Greene's *The End of the Affair*. The show first appeared here with Griff Rhys Jones in the hilarious double role of a Fiat boss who survives an assassination attempt thanks to a worker, but then mistakenly is given the worker's features during plastic surgery. You can only begin to guess the rest.

David Benedict

Time for England to fulfil their greatest expectation

Not so long ago, tours to the West Indies were no more than exercises in damage limitation, where at times medical insurance appeared more essential than a bat. Times and the laws of cricket have changed however, and Derek Pringle says Michael Atherton's England team, who leave for the Caribbean tomorrow morning, have a realistic chance of returning in April as winners - providing they do not lose either of the first two Tests.

Unless you have unlimited wealth, or some serious firepower, the Caribbean is not the kind of place to live out your dreams. But while many have come to conquer, few, particularly visiting cricket teams, have managed to leave as victors, and since 1968 only Australia and India have managed to beat the West Indies on home soil. It is a formidable record and one Michael Atherton's side must now overcome, if they are at last to be considered amongst the Test-playing elite.

With the Ashes out of reach, at least until this time next year, the next few months represent an opportunity to become the defining moment of Atherton's captaincy. Win, or at least draw, and England and their current leader can move forward with genuine optimism. Lose heavily, and the inertia caused by yet another failure abroad will surely have to be tackled by a change in direction and leadership, an option Atherton himself con-

sidered only a few months ago.

For England's captain, the situation promises to be far more tense than his last visit to these breezy isles four years ago. Then expectations were low, with a young England side and their fledgling captain travelling more in hope than conviction. This time, however, despite Ladbrokes making the West Indies 4-7 favourites (England are 7-2) for the series, the ports are good, despite Darren Gough's late withdrawal, a setback that should at least concentrate the minds of Andy Caddick and Dean Headley.

For one thing, Atherton is far more experienced (he has now captained England a year longer than it took him to attain an honours degree at Cambridge), and secondly, the West Indies are a weaker side, in some disarray after losing heavily in Pakistan.

Indeed, when England set off from Gatwick tomorrow bound for a fortnight's acclimatisation in Antigua, Atherton's men will have the best chance in two generations of breaching fortress Caribbean and winning the Winda Trophy, a prize not seen in England since Raymond Illingworth hoisted it aloft at The Oval, almost 30 years ago.

To accomplish that they must consistently achieve two things: a first-innings total of at least 280 - Caribbean pitches rarely get better - and an ability to shackle and frustrate the West Indies batsman with disciplined bowling and ferocious fielding. It should help that nine of the 16-strong party toured there last time and know the score, although with some players forewarned is not always necessarily forearmed.

What they must categorically not do is lose the first Test at

Sabina Park in Kingston. Do that and those two ageing but experienced warhorses Courtney Walsh and Curtly Ambrose (35 and 34 respectively) could well rouse themselves for one last hurrah. If they do, it could prove doubly disadvantageous, and instead of the two greener fast bowlers, Mervyn Dillon and Franklyn Rose, being put under pressure, they will get a far easier ride in the senior pair's slipstream.

Mind you, however well the pacemen bowl as a group, the recent laws on bouncer limitation mean they are unlikely to rival the menace of the fast bowling juggernauts of the past. Michael Holding, Andy Roberts, Colin Croft, Joel Garner, Malcolm Marshall and Patrick Patterson were all combined to formidable effect over the years, and with them operating session after session even the most unpromising situations were retrieved by their confidence-rupturing quick bowling.

England have several batsmen who play fast bowling well. Atherton has long found his best against the West Indies, and with Alec Stewart set to bat instead of keep - at least initially - he will have an opening partner capable of taking anything wayward with the new ball apart. Graham Thorpe, too, pulls and cuts well, and the home side may well have to resort to playing a leg-spinner, with Raw Lewis the leading contender.

These days, with most pitches deadlier than they used to be, the bowlers need longer to bowl sides out, which means the batsmen tend to have to score their runs at a fair old lick, and why England's bowlers must be iron-willed in sticking to their length and line.

When Australia won in the Caribbean in April 1995, it was

not Shane Warne that held the key - Caribbean grounds are often too small for spinners to exert pressure - but the unstinting efforts of Australia's then second-choice seamers. Glenn McGrath, Paul Reiffel and Brendon Julian, were all thrown in at the deep end following injuries to Craig McDermott and Damien Fleming, a situation coincidentally echoed by Gough's withdrawal a few days ago.

England can do likewise, providing Brian Lara does not take the game away from them as he did in the first two Tests four years ago when his pair of audacious run-a-ball centuries set up victory. Two down after two, and with the catastrophe of being bowled out for 46 in Trinidad to follow will surely have burred itself too deep into Atherton's memory to be repeated.

Currently troubled by what he sees as a plot to prevent him becoming captain, Lara is the one batsman on either side capable of total domination and of shaping the series. But while recent series have shown him to be fallible, his Test average against England is currently 91.94 - over twice as much as it is against other teams at 40.79. Pity the man who spills him in the gully early on.

Ironically, many believe - the selectors amongst them - that Lara would make a better captain than Walsh. Certainly Lara, captain of Trinidad since he was 20, bankers after the post and many feel if he were to be appointed that his innate confidence might rub off on the rest of the team.

That the West Indies Cricket Board took the contrary view before the débâcle in Pakistan has brought about much ferment, and the old inter-island rivalries, patched over during the glory days, are once again beginning to simmer. With Jamaica, home to the board's chairman, Pat Rousseau, as well as the current skipper, Walsh, attracting most of the flak.

Clearly not everyone can be kept happy and although Walsh, ever the consummate professional, has stated he will play under any captain, the best way out might be to appoint someone like Jimmy Adams, although he too hails from Jamaica.

It is a rum old row and whichever way you look at it England's chances of a series victory could well be boosted by what looks to be an unavoidably controversial decision.



Chris Silverwood in the nets yesterday during his last session with the England A team at the Gymkhana Cricket Club in Nairobi. Photograph: Graham Chadwick/Allsport

ENGLAND SQUAD FOR WEST INDIES TOUR

Mike Atherton (Lancs) (captain)
Age 29, Tests 73.
Nasser Hussain (Essex) (vice-captain)
Age 29, Tests 23.
Mark Butcher (Surrey)
Age 25, Tests 5.
Andy Caddick (Somerset)
Age 28, Tests 16.
Ashley Cowan (Essex)
Age 22, Tests 0.
John Crawley (Lancs)
Age 25, Tests 22.
Robert Croft (Glamorgan)
Age 27, Tests 10.
Angus Fraser (Middlesex)
Age 32, Tests 32.
Dean Headley (Kent)
Age 27, Tests 3.
Adam Hollidge (Surrey)
Age 26, Tests 2.
Mark Ramprakash (Middlesex)
Age 28, Tests 20.
Chris Silverwood (Yorkshire)
Age 22, Tests 1.
Jack Russell (Gloucestershire)
Age 34, Tests 49.
Alec Stewart (Surrey)
Age 34, Tests 69.
Graham Thorpe (Surrey)
Age 28, Tests 43.
Phil Tufnell (Middlesex)
Age 31, Tests 28.

TOUR ITINERARY

16-19 January v Jamaica Under-23 (Four days); 22-25 January v Jamaica (Four days); 29 January-2 February First Test (Jamaica); 6-8 February Four-day match (Trinidad and Tobago); 13-17 February Second Test (Trinidad and Tobago); 21-23 February Three-day match (Guyana); 27 February-3 March Third Test (Guyana); 7-9 March Three-day match (Barbados); 12-16 March Fourth Test (Barbados); 20-24 March Fifth Test (Antigua); 27 March v Vice-Chancellor's XI (Barbados) (One day); 29 March First one-day international (Barbados); 1 April Second one-day international (St Lucia); 4 April Third one-day international (St Vincent); 5 April Fourth one-day international (St Vincent); 8 April Fifth one-day international (Trinidad and Tobago).

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3497, Friday 2 January By Phil Thursday's solution

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
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11				12			
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27				28			

THURSDAY'S SOLUTION

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
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27				28			

DEREK PRINGLE'S FOUR TO FOLLOW THIS WINTER

Mervyn Dillon

(Trinidad and Tobago)

There is little doubt that the near impenetrability of West Indies cricket in the 1980s was built on lethal and accurate fast bowling. According to many, though, a dearth now threatens, or it would do had bowlers like Franklyn Rose and Mervyn Dillon not happened along. But while both have pace, it is the 23-year-old Dillon who really looks like one out of the old mould.

As you would expect from someone measuring 6ft 6in tall, he extracts plenty of bounce with his seamers and cutters. He is aggressive, too, and while others faltered on the bare pitch in Karachi, where West Indies lost their third Test in a row, Dillon took 5 for 11.

England, too, received a taster in Sharjah, where he bounced out Adam Hollidge and Nick Knight. Given a freer reign in the Tests, we may once again hear the traditional thud of Caribbean "chin music". England's batsmen have been warned.

Sherwin Campbell

(Barbados)

Having missed out learning from batting at the other end to the master Desmond Haynes, Campbell has set about emulating him. Once a carefree strokeplay, the 27-year-old opener is now content simply to anchor the innings and bat all day. According to his home crowd at the Kensington Oval, wild donkeys are easier to remove once he is set at the crease.

It is just as well, without his long gritty innings - he faced 690 balls in the three-match series as compared to the next highest of 280 by the wicketkeeper David Williams - West Indies would have lost even more heavily in Pakistan.

He does have weaknesses and a propensity to keep his weight on the back foot make him vulnerable to the swinging ball early on. He is also a compulsive hooker, which although providing a genuine line of enquiry for bowlers, can also prove expensive on the Caribbean's tiny grounds.

Dean Headley

(Jamaica)

Announced himself during the summer against Australia with a flurry of wickets at Old Trafford, where he showed a natural aptitude for dismissing left-handers: a useful knack as the West Indies may use as many as four in the top six.

A skiddy bowler, Headley may well take the new ball, although not in Jamaica, where he is already apprehensive over the reception that will greet him as he returns to the island that spawned his famous grandfather, George, as well as his father, Ron. England cannot afford nervous starters in what will undoubtedly be the most important Test of the series.

Nearly 28, Headley has much catching up to do if he is to have a fulfilling Test career. A fine fielder, a wandering mind and a fragile body are all that hold him back. As long as he stays fit and keeps his no-ball count to a minimum, any cheap runs from the Sabina Park crowd will soon be forgotten.

Adam Hollidge

(Surrey)

Passed over as one-day captain after leading England to victory in Sharjah, will only have made Adam Hollidge doubly determined to carve a role for himself at Test level.

A batsman with more bottle than finesse - not a bad way round for things to be when facing the West Indies - it may be Hollidge's bowling that helps clinch him the highly contested No 6 spot.

Unless England's bowling is given variety by making Alec Stewart keep wicket (not in plan A apparently), Hollidge's medium-pace mix of swing, cutters and slower balls may prove the perfect foil with which to tempt and taunt the West Indian strokeplayers into injudicious risk-taking.

A natural optimist, he wants to be England's answer to Steve Waugh. If he performs half as well, his team will at least have an all-rounder worthy of a long-term place.

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